

CHAIRSHOTS

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John Hirtcock '93



SHOOTKICK

by Jeff Bowdren

I remember the day well. I refer to the day I received my first Japanese tapes from Meltzer-Wan-Kenobi. I'm going thru them, discovering the original Tiger Mask for the first time and in general having a pretty good time. The last tape I watched, the one that had started out with an unbelievable Texas Death match between Riki Choshu & Killer Khan, had some Japanese girls matches. I hadn't been getting the Observer for very long, but even then Dave was telling everyone about these women. I was a tad leary, having seen nothing but the likes of the Fabulous Moolah.

So here come the girls down the aisle, and in this particular match it was the tag team of Chigusa Nagayo & Kazue Nagahori. For those of you who saw Nagahori, she was pretty much a babe. I'm watching her and getting sort of interested in an absolutely totally sexiest way, when I noticed that the fans are reacting to Chigusa like she's one of the friggin Beatles or something. So now I'm definitely paying attention and then the cameras go back down the aisle for the entrance of the heels. The first girl has her head shaved on one side and is wearing the classic biker regalia (Bull Nakano-my would be lover) and behind her....behind her walked a vision of hell itself. This fat, bleached blonde, leather wearing nightmare. Folks, the Dumpster was a classic. A particularly sick side of my personality was totally in love. In a demented way, of course. So the intros are done, ribbons and streamers cover the ring, the bell rings and the action begins. Bull throws Chigusa out onto the floor and Dump grabs Kazue and throws her into the ropes. Kazue comes off and Dump hits her with this amazing clothesline and Nagahori goes flying and lands on the back of her neck with the rest of her body going the other way. She looked like a damned accordian! The first fall was over in like 10 seconds and I was hooked forever.

The Japanese have an interesting way of dealing with pop stars. They take someone and push them to the hilt, I'm talking more than someone like New Kids on the Block, and make them into an industry unto themselves, then in like 8 months they totally discard them and throw them away like yesterday's news. That might explain the reason why the All Japan women used to have a rule that all women must retire before their 26th birthday. (The only exception I know of to this rule was Dump) This wasn't also such a bad thing as it also encouraged the booker to be creative since things were constantly changing within the promotion.

Chigusa Nagayo was, of course, the most popular of all the women. During her prime, which was around '85 thru '88, she probably was as over a babyface as there has ever been in wrestling. She literally influenced a generation of teenage girls in Japan in the way that someone like Madonna (Ugh-that's the first and hopefully the last time I'll mention that worn out hag in my column) did during the 80's. I'm talking they wore their hair like her, they dressed like her, they followed her music and wrestling career religiously, knew all her lyrics and dance steps. This was an almost textbook example of the promotion using its lead babyface to her full potential. But what was interesting was like the afore mentioned hag-who-shall-not-be-mentioned again, Chigusa's look totally evolved over the years. When she first hit as a major force as part of the Crush Girls (greatest tag team-bar none-of alltime) she was the "cute one", while partner Lioness Asuka was thought of as the one who sort of carried the team. Which was kind of true. Chigusa looked like this fresh faced teenager with sort of a Dorothy Hamill hairdo. You know, the kind of girl you see on the cheerleader squad of your local high school. After five years, she had been transformed into this sort of butchie looking warrior. Apparently somewhere along the line, Chigusa fell head over heels for Akira Maeda and the whole UWF thing and she started looking exactly like the guy. Her ring style became one of far fewer high spots and a greater emphasis on tight kicks and submission style moves (In other words, the UWF) The whole promotion seemed to change with her. Suddenly there seemed to be two kinds of girls. You had the butchie type: Chigusa, Lioness, Yumiko Hotta, Bull Nakano, etc, and then you had the "cute girl": The Jumping Bomb Angels, Yumi Ogura, Kazue Nagahori, Mika "Hum Baby!" Komatsu (total babe), etc. What was particularly interesting was that the fans, which at that point was almost primarily teenage girls, always rooted for the "butchie" looking girls

instead of the "cute" girls. What the hell would Sigmund Freud say about that? Because what was basically happening was that the butchie types were assuming an almost dominant-male like role within the storyline of the matches (Keep your stinkin lousy sexual jokes to yourself-you know what I mean and besides those stories are probably true anyway-except about Chigusa-she's pure) Anyway, this was how the promotion evolved. The zenith of this phase of the promotion was the legendary hair matches between Chigusa and Dump. This was a classic good vs. evil confrontation. The 2nd match, the one where Dump got shaved, may have been one of the alltime productions ever in wrestling. In a way, and I'm not trying to insult them, it almost was similar to a Wrestlemania in the way it was promoted and presented. I mean in the sense that you got the feeling that you were part of a genuine spectacle. The thing was so well presented in fact, that the match couldn't help but be a letdown. And it was. Basically what happened was Dump just kicking the living hell out of Chigusa for about 15 minutes and then Chigusa winning on a total fluke. Afterwards she looked like the victim of a mugging or something. She got a serious ass whipping! She looked similar to Cactus after a match with Vader. But from the point of view of the promotion, the entrances, the wrapup of the postmatch it was almost Titan-esque. The match itself was maybe 3 stars, but the rest of the spectacle put it on my top 100 of the 80's.

The promotion finally suffered what looked to be a fatal blow when Dump finally retired. She may well have been the greatest heel, man or woman, of alltime. The fans that the promotion catered to appeared to be genuinely terrified of her. The card that I went to in late '87 with Meltzer saw teenage girls running in terror, not of me, but of Dump and her infamous kendo stick

The promotion did survive though, both the retirement of Dump & Chigusa, and emerged a leaner and tougher group fronted by Bull Nakano & the flat out drug-induced-ugly Erica Shishedo, aka Aja Kong. But once again the face of the promotion's audience had changed. Gone were the screaming teenagers and in their place was a predominantly male audience. It was like going from Menudo to Metallica in the space of about 6 months. Gone also was a babyface of the stature of the legendary Nagayo, replaced by Bull, in sort of a butt-kicking baby, and others like Toshiyo Yamada (a near twin of Chigusa), Manami "Preeemo Babe" Toyota, Akira Hokkuto (perhaps the closest in spirit as well as work style to Nagayo) and others. The promotion showed that uniqueness of abilities, that of being able to change with the times. Their audience changed, and they adapted to a new one which wanted something other than what Chigusa & Dump had offered. I remember reading recently in the Observer that Dave noticed "how sad" it was that Chigusa wasn't appreciated by the audience. My response to that would be that she was trying to get herself over to a totally different audience! She wasn't wrestling in front of the teenyboppers anymore, she was performing in front of a hardcore male audience that had become accustomed to the brutality of Aja & Bull, or the death defying moves of a Hokkuto, Toyota or Kyoko Inoue. It was like Bob Backlund coming back to the WWF in the 90's and trying to re-establish himself. He was performing in front of a totally different audience! That by the way, is the last time you will ever hear Bob Backlund and Chigusa compared in an article. You might want to save it on that basis alone.

What's to become of our girls from All-Japan women? Right now they appear to be almost at another crossroads. Their recent working relationship with JWP and other groups may have been a grasping at straws or a stroke of brilliance. The group will have to learn to live without Bull, who is being phased down dramatically, and Akira Hokkuto, who's body appears to have finally given out. Will new and better girls step forward? As always, it will be an interesting group to follow if for no other reason that historically in the past the group has always stepped up and "hit a home run", if you will (in public-if you will....) I will probably find myself sitting up late one night trying to avoid watching the girls for one reason or another, knowing that if I start the tape, I won't be getting much sleep that night....



SHOOTKICK

by Jeff Bowdren

And hey, is this Smokey Mountain obviously the best damn group in this country or what? I just finished looking at my latest tape and I loved it! I can honestly say that SMW is the only promotion, including the Jap's, that I have had non-wrestling fans ask to look at. I watched it the other day with a guy who's a big hockey fan, which of course had him loving the Moondogs and their chairs, stop signs, vacuum cleaners, etc. The guy told me he thought he was watching an old Flyers game! Anyway, making a late charge in the feud of the year category has to be this White Boy-Brian Lee situation. Some of the best acting I've seen in years! Hell, I'll go ahead and say what no one else will: it's better than Jimmy's stuff! If Tammy Fytch doesn't win rookie of the year in the Observer yearbook, their ought to be an investigation! Just a bevy of tremendous lines: "I'd rather gargle with a mouthful of bees than be Brian Lee's partner"-DWB "Brian, can you say 'slut' on television?"-Tammy Fytch "I don't need any friends, I've got hate to keep me company!"-DWB (GREAT!) "Gee Brian, do you suppose she gives the White Boy a daily or weekly rate?"-Tammy

All these are great, but the courthouse vote for the SMW quote of the year goes to Darryl Van Horn, who during an interview segment with the always exciting and thrilling Tim Horner, said the following: "The only girls that follow you around are those moo-cows who reek of Monostat-7 and malt liquor!"-(That one should go into some kind of hall of fame)

So, as you can see, you folks are gonna need to get some of the wacky goings-on.

It is now time for indeed a great and illustrious honor. The naming of our first, and thus far only, Shootkick of the Year. You've waited a long time for this and you've been patient. Or, maybe you been a patient, I don't know. But anyway, I should mention that we have a runner-up in this category, which is of course very important, because if for any reason the winner should suddenly turn brilliant and start acting normal, this person would have to assume the position. (No Patterson jokes please) Our first runner-up, for the Shootkick of the Year is: Cowboy Bill Watts! Hey, there's been some time gone under the bridge, but I haven't forgotten old bigoted Bill, the man who's son went from contender to jobroni in one fell swoop. Who hell is Apter gonna have for his rookie of the year now? Anyway, the goof from Oklahoma who made a ton of predictions and promises before he got the job followed up on basically none of them when he took office. What we got was a retread of Oily Anderson in 1990, with that "let's go back to 1972" bullshit. Hey Bill, it was a hell of a race, you ran real hard, but you got nipped at the end by someone who did something that many of us thought was impossible. He turned out to be a bigger asshole than you!

The big winner, and by that I mean the acne scarred-protruding forehead-anal retentive-softball swinging-scissor wielding-bottle pissing(yeah right!)-ego inflated-big contract blowing-world title never getting-ego inflating, never gonna be having another job getting retard that his mother forced from her bowels, because something or someone as retched as this idiot could not have been a product of a natural childbirth,.....ladies, gentlemen, hardcores and degenerates of all ages, I give you the Shootkick of the Year award to our first winner, Mr. Sidney "Hey Mom, are they hiring down at the Jiffy Lube, cuz I'm never gonna get another job in wrestling if there's a God in heaven" Vicious. I know he must be proud.....

ARENA RAMBLINGS

BY
RON
LEMIEUX

As the year comes to a close there are a lot of personal changes that will make 1994 an even more interesting year to follow. There are many questions facing the industry which will be answered in the coming months. The main ones focus on the state of both the WWF and WCW. World Championship Wrestling's recent decision to cut out house shows leaves many questions. How is that talent going to make a living off of 2 or 3 shows per month? A couple of things they should do is go to a live Saturday night setting at least every other week. They also could have more intriguing match-ups since they shouldn't worry about giving anything away on free TV. I know, I can hear you now. What intriguing match-ups can they give us? This leads me to my next point. Lots of rumors have Bobby Heenan going to WCW. That to me would crowd WCW's broadcast team. Jesse's contract runs out in February. I'd let it run out and sign Heenan. Use Jesse's money to do what they should have done a long time ago and that is sign some REAL wrestling talent. However, don't be surprised to see Jim Crockett court Heenan and try to sign "The Brain". Heenan may be making the right decision in going with a new group instead of entrusting the no-braintrust at WCW with his talents.

You have to wonder if Titan is in money trouble since they let the most valuable broadcast man in the business go without a fight. Of course, the WWF has their legal problems to contend with in '94. (Let me wipe the sand out of my eyes as some writers seem to think my head's in the sand.) Curt Hennig is another recent departee in Titan. Word is now that he indeed will be accepting indy dates. The Undertaker is rumored to be wanting to take time off from the business come April which lends credence to why the WWF will probably give Lex Luger the title shot at Wrestlemania X.

All in all we have the makings of another turbulent year in the world of pro wrestling. As usual, it is never dull.

Other stuff: Davey Boy Smith was let go by WCW due to no showing 2 TV tapings. At press time there was no word on who would take his place at Starcade. Why do the letters S-I-D scare me. They should go for a big shock and make it Hogan. Calm down, just one shot....Look for the Owen Hart full fledged turn to happen at the Rumble as they've added a tag title bout with The Quebecers vs. Bret & Owen....Marcus Bagwell's brother John (working as John Stevans) lost a TV squash recently to Ice Train....Two more examples that all the media thinks about when it comes to wrestling is the WWF. These excerpts from the 12/13 Sporting News: "The perfect replacements for the striking NHL referees would have been the refs from the World Wrestling Federation." Tony Lofredo of Tingley Park, NY..and "Lambeer was the sports worlds best known villain outside the World Wrestling Federation" basketball writer Tim Povtak....Do you want a bridge burned? Call Eddie Gilbert. The recent fiasco he and his brother Doug pulled off in W*ING was ridiculous. And now I heard he showed up in Memphis on Saturday TV. Maybe there is no such thing as burning bridges in this business. How about reburning?....After reading Tim Whitehead's column in the last Chairshots about why it's proof that Tracy Smothers is a great worker because Baba doesn't bring any slugs into All Japan, I ran to my old Observers to try to prove him wrong. However Mr. Whitehead by looking at this year's old issues of the Observer I must apologize. The only guys I saw in All Japan this year that didn't belong were Al Perez, Kendall Windham, and Thunder & Lightning. I can guarantee you T & L won't be back. I thought there were a lot more than that. Maybe in past years. Can anyone think of other slugs that didn't belong in All Japan?....Can you believe Jerry Lawler worked in Louisville a couple of weeks ago? There were people outside the Gardens handing out leaflets in support of the King. Too bad it was Lawler that got the people together to do it. Oh, sorry Pete, I forgot Lawler was squeaky clean....Outback Jack recently called the Ron & Ron show to give some other juice about McMahon. But when Ron Bennington asked what Outback's background in Titan was, Jack said he main evented against Hogan and Bundy. Fez Whatley who is the wrestling expert the show rebuked Outback's statements and called him a ham and egger. It ended up in an argument with Outback threatening to go to the studio and beat up Whatley....A legit riot broke out in a town in Virginia on 12/10 for Smoky Mountain. It apparently started during a battle royal and the faces and heels were helping fight the fans together. They all had to have a police escort out of the city....12/12 in the Meadowlands saw Owen Hart over Bastis Booger, HeadShrinkers defeated Men On A Mission, Rick Martel beat Virgil, Doink pinned Bigelow, Randy Savage and Crush went to a double count out, I.R.S. beat Marty Jannetty, Ramon & 1-2-3 Kid beat Atom Bomb & Johnny Polo, and Lex Luger downed Ludvig Borga in front of 10,500....And finally. Did you read Sid's interview in Wrestling Flyer from Dec. 1992? Had to laugh when he said there were guys in this business that thought they could make it with their body alone. Also kind of eery when he mentioned that Arn Anderson helped him a lot early in his career. He was quoted as saying Arn was very kind to him. Sure he didn't imagine what would happen almost a year later....Happy holidays to all. Get ready for another wild year in wrestling!

See ya,

Ron

Barrister's Brawl

By Chris Qualmann, Esq.

"Legal Aspects of the Wrestling Industry": Ten years ago, who would have imagined the existence of such a column in a wrestling publication? But a quick scan of today's mat headlines - Federal Indictments, Rape Charges, Drug Convictions, Attempted Murder Charges, Injured Fan Lawsuits, Contract Disputes, Trademark Litigation, State Attempts at Wrestling Regulation - makes it clear that we've only seen the tip of the iceberg of the growing entanglement between law and wrestling.

For the first edition of "Barrister's Brawl", I thought I'd tackle a topic which has crossed the mind of every hardcore at least once:

"So You Want to be a Wrestling Promoter?"

This article will focus on the legal issues of promoting independent wrestling cards, but I will draw from my own experience as former director of the concert program at the University of Florida. In weeks between shows featuring U2, The Police, Tom Petty or Jefferson Starship, we'd bring Florida Championship Wrestling to the Florida Gym, and eventually to the O'Connell Center. Back then, it amazed me how much the company personnel protected the business. I recall sitting alone with FCW's Lester Welch in a ticket office 2 hours before the start of an early 80's show featuring Harley Race defending the NWA title against Jack Brisco. When I asked Les about the probable outcome of the main event, he said, "I don't know, Brisco's been wrestling pretty good". Or when I informed Les there was only one dressing room for use by heels and faces, he said, "We'd better put the Police on notice, I'm sure there will be lots of flights tonight".

Concert promoters won't sell tickets without great bands; sports promoters can't fill stadiums without great teams; and similarly, wrestling promoters won't put "butts in seats" without great wrestlers. So, the first aspect of this article deals with:

(1) **Booking Talent:** In the vast majority of indie shows, wrestlers are booked without a written contract, a practice I strongly advise against. In most states, including Florida, oral contracts are enforceable, but the terms of oral agreements are difficult to prove without a written understanding. Single-event wrestler contracts don't need to be lengthy or complicated; a one-page letter format or memorandum which spells out the basics (date, place, time, compensation) is sufficient, for

so long as the document is signed by both parties. An essential clause to be included in a wrestler contract is an agreement that the wrestler is hired as an independent contractor, not as an employee of the promoter. Among other things, this clause requires the wrestler to be responsible for payment of his own withholding tax, social security and workmen's compensation. Most wrestlers are paid a "flat fee" as opposed to a percentage, with the bigger names on the indie circuit (Sullivan, DiBiase, Valentine, Keirn, Hercules) receiving at least \$300 a night, plus transportation expenses. Undercard guys and locals usually get \$25-\$75. Promoters often promise a bonus if there's a "big house" (but from the wrestler's point of view, don't accept a handshake - get it in writing!) In the event a Promoter (such as a county fair manager) "buys a show" or co-promotes an event with a larger federation, only a single contract is necessary with the federation (rather than multiple documents with all the wrestlers). Promoters who plan to videotape their shows for television or even just promotional purposes need a written release from every wrestler on the card, authorizing use of the wrestlers' performances in all media (TV, film, video), in perpetuity.

(2) **Facility Contracts:** Whether it's a sports arena, municipal auditorium, or high school gym, promoters can expect a lengthy, one-sided, pre-printed contract which has little room for negotiation. Professional sports arenas charge a guarantee (\$3,000 to \$10,000 per night) versus a percentage of the gross ticket sales (10 to 15%). City buildings and high schools usually require a flat fee ranging from \$250 to \$750 (schools may be willing to accept \$1 per ticket). Most facilities will require an up-front deposit of at least 50% of the flat fee or guarantee (particularly with new promoters). Further, facility contracts require the promoter to be responsible for staffing charges (police, ushers, box office personnel) and taxes. Additionally, nearly all facilities require proof of insurance (general comprehensive coverage for injuries to fans and facility damage, with at least \$1,000,000 in total coverage). Promoters can save a lot of money by purchasing a yearly insurance policy (\$1000 to \$1500) as opposed to single-event policies (\$400 to \$800 per night). Large facilities operate their own concession stands with the promoter receiving no percentage. Furthermore, the large arenas charge a fee of 20-35% of the gross receipts from merchandise sales. However, small facilities often allow the promoter to run his own concession stand and merchandise table at little or no cost to the Promoter. Large buildings

BABYFACES AND HEELS OF 1993

BY RON LEMIEUX

This is a list of who I believe were faces and heels in the year of wrestling. I don't mean to ruffle any feathers but I'm just being brutally honest.

BABYFACES

Yokozuna- The first heel since Billy Graham to have an extended run as WWF champ. If you think Sgt. Slaughter would have been champ if there was no Gulf War, you're kidding yourself. Second best big man in wrestling. Which leads us to...

BIG VAN VADER- The best big man in wrestling. As Leon White he was the shits, as Vader he is awesome.

MONDAY NIGHT RAW- The only program I make sure I watch while it's on. Most Saturday Night's at 6:09 the VCR is set for TBS. It's brought fun back into watching a weekly wrestling show.

VINCE MCMAHON- If nothing more for working with SMW and USWA this year.

INDEPENDANT PROMOTERS- like Tod Gordon and Dennis Coraluzzo. This has been a great year for indys. These guys bring the fans the action they want to see.

DAVE MELTZER- For being the utmost pro and staying out of the mudslinging that goes on in the sheets. (I'm as guilty as anyone) No matter how much goading he takes from one individual he just keeps his cool. To me, Dave is the only real journalist in the newsletter business. The rest of us are just fans who give their opinions on wrestling. (Sorry Madden, I don't care if you wrote for the friggin' New York Times, I still wouldn't consider you a journalist.)

THE RON & RON SHOW- A great promoter for pro wrestling. There is something mentioned about the sport just about every day. One of the characters Fez Whatley (Wonder where he got his name.) does a "Nature Boy" segment every day and sounds more like Flair than Ric does.

JOHN CLARK- This kid kicks ass when it comes to interviews for his Wrestling Flyer newsletter. Can't wait to read Sid's in his yearbook.

HULK HOGAN- For quitting the sport so the WWF can be entertaining again.

HEELS

SID VICIOUS- Not just for the brawl with Arn, but just for being Sid.

ARN ANDERSON- If there were no eye witnesses, how come everyone thinks Sid was in the wrong? Sorry folks, I don't think Arn can be blameless.

WCW- Which reason? How about for having one of the best broadcast teams but sheelling out those big bucks for them at the same time while they have a bad core of talent. Spend the money where you need it boys.

JOHN AREZZI- How riotious. John stops doing his radio show because it's a conflict of interest with his promoting. Here's a guy who railed Vince over the coals for the steroid debacle yet he's going to use guys like Warlord and Barbarian on his shows in the Carolinas. What a hypocrite. I love Wrestling Chatterbox but the recent positive publicity for him almost made me gag.

Eddie Mansfield- Who? The man who went farther than any other indy promoter in Florida. He had great talent, a good TV set up, and good backing. What he didn't have was a good business sense. He was good on the wrestling end, but should have brought someone in to handle the dealings. The IWF is now history and all we have to show for it are shots at the big time for The Smoking Gunns, Thunder & Lightning, and the Bad Boys (Phi Delta Slam).

WCW PPV's- When I watch one I get the feeling I'm just watching a live MSG card, and sometimes a bad one at that. There's nothing special.

JEFF MULLINS- This one hurts. The Meltzer bashing is old. I hated the way he asked for resposers to his Meltzer year end issue of Sushi. Basically said, "Will you rake Dave over the coals or kiss his ass?" Gee, what kind of response do you think Jeff wanted? I already talked to a couple of people who won't send in positive things on Dave because they are afraid Jeff will crucify them in the sheet. What's worse though is the rumor that Jeff "layed in bed" so to speak with Mike Lano on the bogus Carlos Rey letter that went to Dave. Now only Dave knows the truth but we'll never hear it because he doesn't bring up that kind of dirt in the Observer. Now that I spilled my guts, I guess I'll be Jeff's new target taking Levine's place.

usually require the use of computerized ticket services such as Ticketmaster, which charges a set-up fee and per-ticket cost to the Promoter, and a service charge to the buyer (what a scam, wish I had thought of it ten years ago!). Small buildings will allow the Promoter to print his own tickets and hire his own ticket sellers (don't forget to have written contracts with ticket outlets!). One thing upon which major and independent promoters, and facilities of all sizes will agree: live wrestling is a "walk-up" business. Promoters must expect 75-90% of their ticket sales to occur night of show.

(3) Regulations and Licenses; Structure of Promoter's Business: Most states are leaning away from regulating pro wrestling, due in part to Vince's acknowledgment before the New Jersey legislature that wrestling is "sports-styled entertainment", which simulates "hand-to-hand combat" (or something to that effect). As many are aware, there was an effort to regulate wrestling in Florida 2 years ago, but the issue appears to be dead for the time being. However, I'm aware of an incident involving a Florida indie promoter this year whose show was nearly shut down because the local police believed the event qualified as a "pugilistic" (boxing) exhibition, which would require, among other things, the presence of an ambulance and a medical doctor. Bottom line, Promoters must have a complete understanding of the state and local regulations in the area in which they do business. At the very least, all counties and cities require the purchase of occupational licenses (many facilities require proof of such licenses before leasing their buildings). I usually advise wrestling promoters to consider incorporating their businesses, in order to limit their personal liability. Operating as a sole proprietorship or partnership exposes the company's principals to unlimited liability for injuries to spectators, facility damage, and other damages. One more thing: Promoters must not forget to pay taxes on the sale of event tickets. There are no nastier creditors than the IRS or state taxing authorities.

(4) Advertising: I'm often asked the questions: "What's a Promoter's liability for no-shows", and "What can happen from placing misleading advertisements" (Florida fans are familiar with one particular promoter who advertises names like "Muta", "Anvil", and even "Mr. Wrestling II"). Florida has the "Deceptive and Fraudulent Trade Practices Act" which provides civil penalties for misleading advertisements. Further, most facilities won't re-lease to a promoter who continues to deceive the public. In my opinion, for so long as the Promoter advertises talent whom the Promoter in good faith had contracted to appear, and the Promoter used an appropriate disclaimer in advertisements, the Promoter's chances for liability from no-shows are small (however, loss of credibility from the public may

be a heavier price to pay). In purchasing ads, Promoters must be aware that as with leasing facilities, newspapers and TV stations usually require an up-front 50% deposit (if not the whole amount). A great way for indie promoters to defray expenses is to seek event sponsors, such as a local restaurant or sporting goods store. By simply hanging a banner from the ceiling, wall, or ring apron, the cost of an event can be significantly lessened. To insure further event exposure, Promoters must insist that facilities include scheduled wrestling events on the buildings' event calendars and outdoor marquees.

(5) Other tips: Don't forget the cost for renting the ring and guardrail: expect to pay \$175-\$350 (often, the "ring guy" will work as a referee). And pay something to the ring announcer and time keeper: they had expenses too! What's my biggest beef about indie shows? As my buddy Lemieux will attest...they never start on time! (be aware that many buildings charge penalties for shows which run long). Lastly, buy a cassette of the "Star Spangled Banner" for the start of the show. It may seem corny, but a wrestling match is not the same without it.

Chris Qualmann is an entertainment lawyer based in Orlando. His wrestling clients have included the Smoking Gunns, Steve Keirn, Davey Boy Smith, the IWF and other independent wrestling promoters. He serves as the Chairman of the "Florida Entertainment Commission", a board appointed by Florida Governor Lawton Chiles to promote the State's Entertainment Industries. Obviously, the Governor didn't know about his "evil twin" who occasionally ring announces indie shows, and recently took a nasty bump from a deranged Kevin Sullivan.

SPECIAL THANKS TO
EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH
THIS SPECIAL ISSUE!

CS RETURNS ON
JAN. 15, 1994!

GREENSBORO COLISEUM

by
John
Hitchcock

I was asked by Bashful Barry to retell some good ol' Front Row stories from the Greensboro Coliseum. So be it. I have got a million of them. I figure the one story that needs clarification is "The Night of the Red Invasion", or "Joe McCarthy Was Not Wrong".

I'm guessing this happened around 1985? Or '84? Anyway, the Crockett Promotions NWA was in town at the good ol' coliseum. When I went inside the warm building I remember that the people were farm mutants, the popcorn was fuckin' stale, and the hotdogs sucked huge hard ones! And the pizza was and is still like eating hot cardboard. So much for those glorious memories of taste and smell. Anyway, yours truly was sitting about in the 14th row. We got screwed out of the Front Row that night by a bunch of blue-haired bitches who inhabit another reality of rasslin'. So I'm sitting with about 10 or 12 guys and having a ball cheering for the heels. Signs are constantly flashing my brilliance for all to see. I guess that's why I always had gum in my hair and drinks thrown at me: the populous was jealous. But I always admired the heels and was a fan since Rip Hawk and Swede Hanson. That night Ivan, Nikita, and Crusher were rasslin' so we decided it would be a gas to act like we were Russian immigrants cheering for our fellow countrymen. I... er... did I mention that this was a dangerous thing to do? Anyhow, I was wearing a long trenchcoat with a red KGB button, and was doing my best Uncle Ivan when this huge, gross old lady turned around and said:

Old Lady: "You are not cheering those damn Russians, are you?"

Me: "Why, yes I am, old lady!"

OL: "Why are you doing that?"

Me: "Because I am from Russia and have green card. I am visitor to your country, and I have come to cheer Uncle Ivan, Nikita, and Crusher."

OL: "Well, I have got a son fighting a war to make this country safe, and I don't appreciate you cheering those damn Communists!"

(I am not making this up. I knew this lady was fat, stupid, and backwoods, but nuts was a dream come true. What an opportunity to fuck with this lady. I couldn't pass this shit up!)

Me: "Why do you treat us so rudely, old lady?"

(By now her husband and three kids were rolling. I think her husband - or is that *slave* - was laughing the most at me hammering this obnoxious old bitch.)

OL: "Your kind is ruining the world, and I bet you are the only one here cheering for the Russkies!"

Me: "You are wrong, fat old lady."

(I stood up and pointed to some friends who stood up and up and saluted, and then to my brother's group who also stood and saluted.)

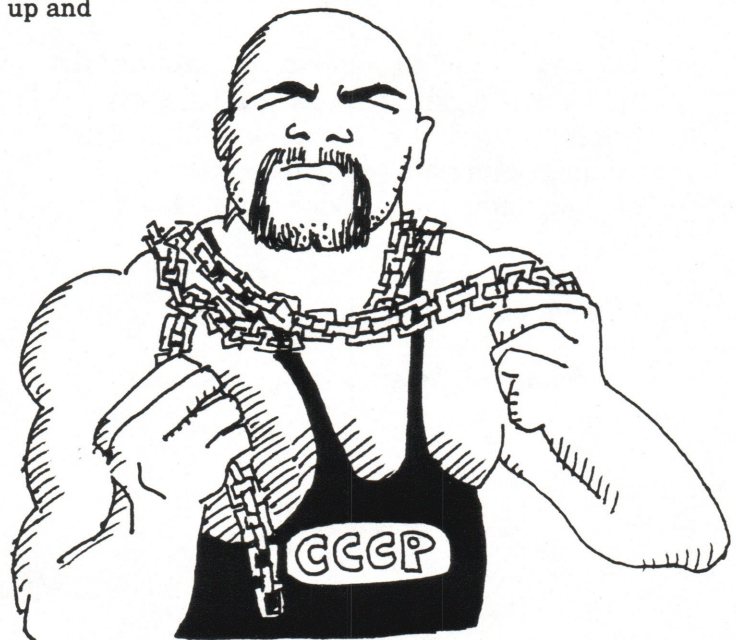
"See, old lady, Joe McCarthy was right. We are everywhere!"

OL: "I hate Commie dogs like those Russians! They cheat! They are un-American!"

Me: "You are stupid, old lady! Ivan is a great man in Soviet Union. Nikita is Olympic athlete, and Crusher a lost soul turned to the hammer and sickle."

OL: "You are just causing trouble like all Russian pigs! You are the only one!"

Me: "Have you not heard of the Boston Red Sox? Cincinnati Reds? Detroit Red Wings?"





Another from group: "Red Buttons?"

Me: "Red Skelton? See, old lady, we already own your country!"

OL: "I have a son fighting a war!"

Me: "What war, dumb lady? Secret war?"

OL: (screaming at me now) "I GOT A SON! FIGHTING A WAR!"

Me: "I will go to this war and shoot your son, and drink a toast at the Kremlin on the Red Square on the grave of your stupid dead son. Vodka toast to the Soviet might! It will be glorious! A victory for the Fatherland!"

OL: "I HATE YOUR GUTS! COMMUNISTS ARE THE ENEMY! THE UNITED STATES WILL ALWAYS BE FREE!"

Me: "Do not worry, old lady, we will have a job for you when we take over your country. You can dig in salt mines. You and your whole family! This will make Ivan proud!"

OL: "I GOT A SON WHO'S FIGHTING A WAR!"

Me: "He will be crushed under the people's boot, old lady!"

And of course the Russians won their match! There was obviously a lot of camaraderie! Hugging and, of course, Russian dancing in the aisle. Needless to say, this drove the old lady nuts.

OL: "YOU PEOPLE ARE CRAZY!"

Me: "Shut up old lady!"

OL: "I'VE GOT A (huff! puff!) SON WHO'S..."

Me: "Why do you not admire our superiority, old lady? We rule the Olympics, do we not? You and your whole stinking family are fools!"

OL: "I HATE RUSSIANS! YOU COMMIE DOGS!"

Me: "Here I come to your country, and I am treated rudely by you?!? I am visitor! Oh! Oh! I understand! You are country redneck, ignorant old lady!"

I continued to yell and scream until the old lady's giggling family led her away, shaking her fist at this group of Russian immigrants here solely to support their fellow countrymen. Good Russians.

I never saw that lady again, and looked for her at every card.

Some people are soooooooooo stupid.



J. Hittcock '93

Confessions of a Tape Trader

By Jeff X

(after the proliferation of grappling fandom's Jeffs)

I confess. I make copies of wrestling tapes and send them to friends. I also *sell* copies of certain tapes. It's horrible, it infringes on copyrights. It's downright despicable. And I will continue to do it all. Come hither and hear my tale.

A year after I became a hardcore fan – attending shows with a group of “smart” hecklers, subscribing and writing letters to newsletters, taping all PPVs and specials – I got that yen to see things which I felt I had missed by “coming in late to the game.” For instance, what about those wily Japanese grapplers? What do their matches actually look like? And this Memphis-based USWA... what makes this Jerry Lawler the King?

Poring through the *Observer's* Readers Pages microclassifieds, I discovered that there were others with the same affliction. In fact, they were willing to exchange some of their tapes for other things. Namely, PPV rock concerts. While I am a music fan, it is my brother who begs me to tape Guns N Roses from France and Madonna on HBO. These events paid off for me, as I was able to parley them into a couple of tapes of classic Memphis and independent shows in Philly.

Once tempted, I ordered a few Japanese tapes from John Lanigan in Pennsylvania. I saw Owen Hart teaming with Bam Bam Bigelow and Pat Tanaka against three Japanese. (Sorry, Dave – but after Kento Kobashi and Misawa, my knowledge of the names breaks down.) This was astounding. I realized that yeah, some of these guys were good. But my finances could not afford to constantly order these tapes. And my time was getting cramped – between a regular job, a girlfriend, and trying to start a real career, where was I going to find the time to watch all these matches, no matter how terrific?

But the fire had been lit, and once tendered, it would have to be stoked. After a few bad experiences with warped and bad quality tapes, I met a few good trader/sellers. Steve Friedlander in the Bronx has a voluminous list that defies all logic. I bought a few tapes from him, and then traded with him when his VCR fucked up and missed the last MSG-telecasted house card (battle royal that Sid won). Bob Barnett has been the most reputable with his Japanese compilations. I got a couple of tapes from Brian Tramel before real life overtook him.

I have no great desire to badmouth anyone selling poor quality tapes. It could have been an accident, they could have been amateur attempts, or a busted VCR. I simply won't order or trade with them anymore. This is such a small community of individuals that if you burn people once or twice, the word will get around and pretty soon your marketplace will dry up.

I compiled my own tape list and left a pile of them at

one of John Arezzi's wrestling conventions. I got a few small orders for one or two tapes, but overall that covered my outgoing expenses for Japanese tapes. Then in February, I received a phone call from a guy who had picked up my list the previous August and wanted to order two tapes. When I got his check and sent them out, he immediately phoned the next Saturday and ordered four more. This went on for a couple of months, until he had placed close to \$350 in tape orders.

Suddenly, I was placed in an ethical bind. What I was doing was definitely wrong. According to Florida-based attorney Chris Qualman, I was guilty of copyright and trademark infringement, as well as violation of the right to publicity of individuals. “Remember,” he told me. “The WWF sent a cease-and-desist order to Wade Keller for running a gag item on how fans should wear WCW shirts to WWF events to get free WWF t-shirts. They're serious.”

As far as international tapes go, the U.S. is part of the Bern Convention, which stipulates a reciprocal enforcement of copyrights. However, until those groups – such as New Japan or Mexico's AAA – get on American television and assemble their own power legal teams, it would be hard for them to halt trading or selling. “Foreign rights can, but are unlikely to be enforced domestically,” Qualman reports. “As the groups establish relationships here, this could change.”

Publications which allow tape traders/sellers to get in touch with each other (*Mat Marketplace* will be my example here) create an atmosphere for illegal activity, and could be charged with aiding and abetting. Damages would be negligible, however the statutory rewards for copyright infringement escalate to upwards of \$1,500.

The WWF has been virulent about protecting their turf. Their harrassed a 16-year-old (Jason Shepard) into abandoning fan clubs for Shawn Michaels and Curt Hennig. But they have to bash high and low. It is similar to Disney Studios forcing an elementary school into repainting over its Mickey and Donald sketches. Once they allow the precedent to be set, others would follow more audaciously.

Could I get in trouble? Could this cost me more money than I had earned? Sure shooting, Popeye. But I decided that the risk was worth it. Somehow, I had to support getting these groups which otherwise I'd miss. Fandom has its downside, after all.

As of this writing, \$35 worth of orders sit on my shelves, waiting for the checks to come in so I can send them out. I am prepping to assemble a concerts list, as there are plenty of wrestling fans who would trade for or buy the recent U2 PPV. Life is good, tapes are cheap, and the WWF has yet to find my doorstep. In the meantime, I'm going to enjoy myself. This is a hobby, not a criminal vocation. Let's all try to relax and have some fun.

NERVE ENDINGS

BY PETE LEDERBERG

I hope everyone's having a great holiday season. Have a great new year with great health and happiness! Get well to Dave Meltzer, and anyone else that I'm unaware of who isn't doing so well.

I'm saddened by the departure of Jimmy Berkely from our staff. He was the person that I truthfully see eye to eye with moreso than the others. Good luck in whatever you do Jimmy.

Kudos to Dave Scherer for finally summing up my negative feelings for the Torch in our last issue. The pretentiousness of Wade seems to permeate his own staff, I'll refer to this more later. Also, kudos to Ron Lemieux for finally having a factually correct news column. One in a row-way to go!

I'd like to make a personal plug for Jeff Mullins, author of "Son of Sushi", available from him at PO Box 36189/San Jose, CA/95158 for \$4 and 4 sases for 4 issues (cash and sases only). If you haven't "taken a bite of Sushi", and you still have a sense of humor, I strongly suggest you give it a try. Jeff is putting out a special double issue on the heels of this issue of Chairshots (unrelated to Chairshots) dealing with hardcores honest opinions about The Wrestling Observer and Dave Meltzer. Jeff tells me that no matter what other sheets and reading material he has laying around, he puts them aside and reads Chairshots first, much like the way I do the same with Sushi.

A lot of times, I'll comment on things going on in society, and often try to correlate how it filters down to wrestling and the sheets (note the distinction between the two). Something that has troubled me, and has come to the forefront lately due to the legal battles going on is the sensationalism of charges, the lack of respect for due process (basically the assumption of guilt) and/or the amount of damage that is caused by the media (and sheet writers-note the distinction again) by their biased reporting of charges that may or may not be true, and whenever someone is absolved of charges the media (and sheet writers) never make up for all of the damage that they may have caused for an innocent party. Usually, you see all kinds of sensational headlines and stories when charges are brought up, yet a paragraph or two if someone is absolved with no apology.

I expect irresponsible journalism from the Torch. They try to claim to be a beacon of responsible journalism (steroid issue, etc) yet they present their OPINIONS as FACTS, then either don't print any opposing views for balance, and/or try to discredit their opposition. The arrogance of their writers seems to filter down and be encouraged from and by their editor. For a recent example, in their issue dated 11/22/93, they did a whole edition on the McMahon indictment, wherein anyone disagreeing with their views was discredited, and their arrogance in doing a "State of The Business Address" when none of them is in the business is pathetic. Special note taken of Wade's BBL column, in which he used the word spin and derivations more than 40 times in less than one page (this was typical of him to use a trendy word- remember how often he used the phrase "chroma-key") and Bruce Mitchell's column, where he talks about other "sheets" (Quotation marks his, not mine-I wonder if he's referring to the Torch as being the only thing deemed worthy of being called a sheet-just remember the way a spanish person usually pronounces the word shit) sticking their heads in the sand about steroids, and losing "relevance, respect and ultimately their readers". Of course, all of this is factual to Bruce. Guess what, we were one of the "sheets" he was referring to, and to paraphrase Barry we are often irrelevant, never cared about respect, but our readership has increased. Wrong again!

I never really expected the sensationalism to hit the Wrestling Observer, but was really disgusted by Meltzer trying to equate and actually claim that it was worse, referring to Jerry Lawler's babyface push and publicly defending himself on USMA tv against his charges versus Puerto Rico's attempt to do the same to Jose Gonzales after the Bruiser Brody murder. Admittedly, I am a fan and friend of Lawler, but anyone else I've spoken to about that has basically said the same thing, "last time I checked, no knife was found nor a murder committed". Now before all the politically correct start penning letters about this statement, let me say two things: 1) I realize Dave Meltzer is sick right now, but I'm not

kicking a man when he's down. I was debating whether or not to say anything about this, but felt it was relevant, so don't take me over the coals for criticizing Meltzer (especially you Mullins). 2) I realize and feel that statutory rape is wrong, and am not trying to trivialize it. However, realize that Lawler was accused and has not been convicted to date. Re-read my earlier comments about journalistic irresponsibility. Another thought, how many of you high and mighty are guilty yourselves of either statutory rape or victims? You see, the age varies from state to state, but the bottom line is for the small percentage of you that have actually had sex (with someone else that is) do you know what age you were the first time, and do you know the age of your youngest partner, and the statutory rape age in the state you had sex in? Realize that with this particular charge, consent is irrelevant. Let me state that when I spoke to Jerry, he denied the charges. How many of you are 100% sure about all of the current legal charges going around wrestling? Maybe some of you would say that about McMahon for instance, but let's stick to Lawler's case. If you have any doubt in your mind, even if it's 1%, let's look at the scenario that is causing your doubt. Let's say that this was an extortion attempt. Do you realize how much damage has been done to this man, his company, and his reputation? That's why the innocent until proven guilty ideal was brought into this country. Before that, we often had witch hunts, quite often literally, wherein all someone had to do was accuse you of being a witch, and you were pretty much doomed. So, just because someone is accused of something, it doesn't necessarily mean that they did it, and the "journalists" who go off on someone because of accusations show a great deal of irresponsibility (unless they retract their stories, parodies, etc later, but damage is still done, remember that). Which brings us to our own Jeff Bowdren. In my opinion, Jeff is a great writer, and I have enjoyed much of his stuff, from Bowdren the Booker, to his articles for Meltzer & Wade, to a lot of his stuff in this sheet. However, I've noticed contradictions a plenty lately in his writing, a recent example being his column where he accused others of name-dropping a couple of issues back, wherein he namedropped (of course it was mostly his hardcore buddies-not people in the business) throughout. The latest, and worst example to me, was his last column, where he did his little ditty about Lawler, then proceeds to talk about working in the courthouse, and his knowledge of the law, and the innocent versus guilty issue, then rips Lawler again, completely presuming guilt and/or irresponsible and contradictory writing. Jeff says it was wrong for Lawler to use a public forum to defend himself. Jeff, let's say that someone accused you of something, for example being emasculated by a woman. Would you defend yourself? Well, before you start to, realize that the accusation hasn't been publically formalized and we're just using a "hypothetical example" here. Also, when you use your only public forum (these pages) to defend yourself again, realize your fallacy (by the way, you have already defended yourself against public allegations in these pages made by Tom Nash in his interview). Always remember, don't be a hypocrite. I really feel sorry for people who need titles (like the booker, calling yourself the #1 writer for Chairshots, and god knows what Wade used as a descriptor for you when you wrote for him) to get their feeling of self-worth and importance. Too many hardcores have no perspective on the business, and make out their relationships with wrestlers to be far more than they are and equate knowing some other hardcore as knowing someone in the business, when that's not the case. A hint for all of you, if you reveal everything someone in the business tells you to impress your friends, the person in the business won't be your friend for too long (right Buddy!). I'll finish up by saying what I've said in previous columns again, if all of you sheet writers (especially Torch turkeys) keep trying to rip wrestling apart, if you get your way, there won't be anything for you to write about any more. I assume, if you're mentally healthy that you do this as a labor of love in a sense, since little or no money is involved. Try to consider that when you're writing your columns and letters of condemnation and doom and gloom. Lighten up, and remember that you have the wrestling bug, and trust me, it rarely goes away.

"VIOLENCE IN THE HILLS"

BY TIM WHITEHEAD

**"THE PEOPLE IN THE HILLS OF TENNESSEE HAVE BEEN BRED IN VIOLENCE. . .
VIOLENCE IS AN EVERYDAY PART OF THEIR LIVES!"**

The above words were spoken by Kevin Sullivan during a local promo for an NWA card at Johnson City's Freedom Hall back in 1988. But they could've been spoken by any heel at any time in any promotion running wrestling cards in this area. After all, the reputation of this part of the country, currently the home base of Smoky Mountain Wrestling, is one straight out of an Erskine Caldwell novel, or at least out of Coal Miner's Daughter. Is the reputation deserved? Well, as with most things in life, the truth is in the middle. There are some counties up in the hills of Kentucky where shotgun justice still rules the day. Dr. Day, my major professor in college, was a native of that area and he loved to tell the story of a local man who was acquitted on a murder charge because the jury ruled that the victim was an asshole who deserved to be killed. On the other hand, Knoxville, the largest city in the region, has its "bad neighborhoods" such as are found anywhere, but it's not particularly dangerous compared to other cities of comparable size. Johnson City (pop. 50,000) is actually a very safe place to live. The Places Rated Almanac (1989 edition) ranks the Johnson City - Kingsport - Bristol metro area as the 27th safest metro area (out of 333 listed) in the U.S.. Nor is the area as deprived of entertainment as many believe. Wrestling fans who came here back in February for the double-shot of SMW in Johnson City and the SuperBrawl pay-per-view (65 miles away in Asheville) were astonished to learn that Metallica had played Freedom Hall a couple of weeks earlier. Anyway, enough about the area, let's talk about the wrestling!

THE GULAS ERA: Though he died a couple of years ago in a rather ignominious manner, Nick Gulas was one of the most successful promoters in wrestling history. He began promoting cards in Nashville on a shoestring budget back around the time of World War II. Legend has it he would personally walk the streets of Nashville hanging cardboard signs advertising his cards. He would wear holes in his shoes, and would patch them up by cutting shoe-shaped pieces of cardboard out of his signs. His hard work paid off, and at the height of his career his territory spanned the entire state of Tennessee, most of Kentucky, Northern Alabama, and also small chunks of neighboring states. Unlike most promoters, Gulas had three TV shows during his peak years: Lance Russell hosted the Memphis show, Sterling Brewer hosted one from Nashville, and Harry Thornton called the action from Chattanooga. Someone told me he also had a Birmingham show, though that one never aired in East Tennessee. When I first became a fan around 1970, Gulas wrestling aired on local channel 19 on Sunday afternoons. Some weeks we would get the Memphis show, while other times we would get the Nashville or Chattanooga programs. It all depended on what the card was the upcoming Tuesday night at the Legion Street Recreation Center in Johnson City. For example, if an angle particularly relevant to the headline match at the Rec Center had occurred on the Chattanooga show, then that was the one which aired on channel 19 the preceding Sunday. It all made sense, and it wasn't as confusing as it sounds since the same roster of wrestlers appeared on all the shows. The Rec Center was usually packed for the Tuesday night cards, even though Johnson City was a minor market compared to Memphis, Nashville, Louisville, etc., and the really big matches and title changes always happened in those larger cities. Ron Wright and his younger brother Don were notorious at the Rec. Never "good" workers in the classic sense of being able to execute wrestling moves (and in those days it was mostly matwork), the Wright brothers were walking hardware stores, carrying chains, can

openers, and anything else they could get their hands on into the ring. Ron Wright's most famous singles feud, in Johnson City at least, was against the beloved Whitey Caldwell, who died in a tragic car accident sometime around 1972. Wright became so hated that once, at a spot show somewhere in the Kentucky hills, his private plane was doused with gasoline and set on fire by angry fans (in case you're wondering, it was empty at the time). Another memorable event in those years occurred when Big Ed Wolfe, a Kingsport police officer who worked the Rec Center cards as a babyface, suffered a severe leg injury as the result of a ring accident. Somehow, gangrene set in and the leg had to be amputated. To this day some old-timers cite the misfortune of Big Ed Wolfe as proof that wrestling is on the up-and-up!

SOUTHEASTERN CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Nick Gulas saw his greatest success in the early-mid 70's, but it was not to last. A dispute with business partner Jerry Jarrett resulted in Memphis splitting off from the Gulas territory. Nick then began pushing his no-talent son George and before you know it he was out of business. In his wake, a new promotion called Southeastern Championship Wrestling sprung up in Knoxville. Though a minor territory by any definition, this small promotion featured a surprisingly good talent roster that included Kevin Sullivan, Bobby Eaton, Dennis Condrey, Terry Taylor, Mongolian Stomper, Toru Tanaka & Mr. Fuji, Don Carson, David Schultz, and even, for a short time, Ole Anderson, who generally hated Tennessee wrestling because he felt the promoters here pushed too many gimmick wrestlers who couldn't work (you may burst out laughing at this point). A few tapes of this promotion are floating around, and if you like SMW you should take a look at SCW because the style is virtually identical. This group lasted a few years, but fell victim to politics in the early 80's when several SCW wrestlers left, accusing promoter Ron Fuller of shorting them on payoffs. They started a "rival" outlaw group, featuring such stars as Ron Garvin, Bob Orton, and Dick Slater, but the practical effect of this promotional war was to kill both groups. Angelo Poffo's IWA, Continental, and the short-lived USA Wrestling group all promoted in the area at different times during the 80's, but it took Jim Crockett to truly revive wrestling in the area.

THE CROCKETT YEARS: Actually, the Crockett family's Mid-Atlantic promotion had long been familiar to East Tennessee wrestling fans. The state line between Tennessee and North Carolina had traditionally been the boundary between Crockett's territory and the Gulas or later Southeastern territory. Asheville's channel 13, which carried Crockett's TV show, was seen throughout the Eastern portion of Tennessee. In fact, I discovered Mid-Atlantic Wrestling a few short weeks after I first saw Gulas' show. Mid-Atlantic, which came to the Asheville Civic Center every Sunday afternoon, always seemed more big time than Tennessee wrestling. The newsstand mags gave heavy coverage to it, far more than Gulas ever received. It featured nationally known stars, from Johnny Valentine and the Briscos to Dusty, Wahoo, and Flair. There was more "wrestling" and less brawling, and less blood, at least on TV. And the World Champion came around more often. In 1985, Crockett crossed the line into East Tennessee and began promoting regularly at Johnson City's Freedom Hall. Crockett was riding high back then with a roster that included Flair, Magnum, Dusty, the Koloffs, the Road Warriors, the Rock & Roll Express, the Midnight Express, Windham, and more. And for a brief time everyone, and I mean everyone, in that promotion was over. But the story of Crockett here was the same story seen nationwide on TBS. That is, one of slow but continuous decline into what is now called WCW. WCW still runs an occasional card here, ironically at the old Rec Center, while SMW runs Freedom Hall. And every fan, whether young or old, knows who is truly the big time!

FOREIGN YEAR IN REVIEW by Dave Scherer

December (1992)-Isn't it weird how the year starts in December? Mitsuha Misawa and Toshiaki Kawada captured All Japan's annual World's Strongest Tag League tourney, and also the tag titles, on the 4th...Kensuke Sasaki and Hawk form their Road Warrior-like tag team...Dynamite Kansai beats Cutie Suzuki on the 1st to become the first JWP Champion...Atsushi Onita and Gregory Veritchev won FMW's Street Fight Tag Team Tourney on 12/7...Aja Kong and Kyoko Inoue won the All Japan Women's Tag Tourney...AAA was killing the EMLL in Mexico...Ultimo Dragon and Masao Orihara beat Jushin Liger and Koji Kanemoto in a great match...Hawk won the CWA title in Germany...Akira Maeda does a job to Chris Dolman on 12/19...El Dandy wins the CMLL Middleweight title...Brazo de Plata took Aaron Grondy's (Mike Bastion Booger Shaw) hair...Mitsuhiro Matsunaga loses a Bed of Nails match to Leatherface...Motoshi Okuma dies.

January-New Japan's 1/4 Tokyo Dome show was, as usual, a big success. On that show, the Great Muta beat Masa Chono for the NWA Title, Jushin Liger pinned Ultimo Dragon to win the IWGP Jr. heavyweight Title, and Genichiro Tenryu beat Riki Choshu in the main event...EMLL and UWA start working together in hopes of hurting AAA...JWP and All Japan Women continue to trade talent...AAA finally runs their first show in Mexico City...Chris Dolman beat Dick Fly to win the RINGS Mega Battle Tournament...Vampiro Casanova beats El Canek for the UWA title, even though he is an EMLL wrestler.

February-Andre the Giant dies...Eddie Guerrero and Hijo del Santo have great matches in Mexico as a team...Hot feud between Winners, Super Cain, and Rey Misterio Jr vs Picudo, Heavy Metal, and Psicosis rages on...Bull Nakano and Akira Hokuto work for the EMLL...AAA forces the EMLL onto a lesser TV station in Mexico...Kerry Von Erch kills himself...Gordy and Williams beat Misawa and Kawada for the PWF tag belts...Van Vader signs with UWFI...Kawada and Stan Hansen have a fabulous match at Budokan Hall.

March-WCW screws its fans (both of them?) again, by advertising, but not showing, the Steiners vs Hell Raisers on their Japan PPV...Atsushi Onita took ill after blading and then jumping into a polluted river...Dino Bravo murdered was in Canada...Debbie Malenko suffered a grizzly broken ankle...Kevin Sullivan sliced and diced Yukihiro Kanemura at a SNW TV Taping.

April-The top two cards of the year, Dream Slams 1 and 2, take place with fabulous matches, great gates and shows that co-promotion and women's wrestling can rake in big bucks...Bull Nakano and Devil Masami wrestle a classic match, as do Stan Hansen and Kenta Kobashi...Stan Hansen beats Mitsuha Misawa to win the Champion Carnival tournament...New Japan fights with Vader for jumping to UWFI...Triple Mania draws 48,000 fans in Mexico City...

May-New Japan draws 53,000 to the Fukuoka Dome show...Bulk Hogan debuts on that show pinning the Great Muta and in an interview after the match he defames the WWF belt while putting over the IWGP title...FMW draws 41,000 to the Kawasaki Baseball Stadium show where Onita beats Terry Funk in a barbed wire exploding landmine match...Vader debuts for UWFI...The first 200 commercial tapes of Dream Slam 1 go on sale for 180 dollars and sell out immediately...Heavy Metal beats Santo for the Welterweight belt in a hot match...Kawada and Taue beat Williams and Gordy for the PWF tag belts thus cementing the "change in sides" of Kawada from Misawa to Taue...AAA draws 30,000 for a show headlined by Heavy Metal's title defense against Santo...Misawa pinned Stan Hansen in a defense of the Triple Crown...Hansen earned the shot by pinning Misawa in the finals of the Carnival Tournament.

June-Gary Graham gets a letter ripping Lucha Libre published in the Observer...Graham's stellar wit and analytical thought make him a candidate for the job of personal assistant to Eric Bischoff...El Satanico jumps from the EMLL to Triple A...The UWA shows its ineptitude by ceasing to air new TV shows and instead aired a rotation of its 5 commercial videos, including tapes of people that had long since left the promotion...All Japan's TV ratings continue to slip...Chigusa Nagayo's movie premiere bombed as badly as any Hogan flick ever has...Pegasus Kid, Chris Benoit, captured the New Japan's annual Junior Heavyweight Tournament...Antonio Inoki is involved in yet another scandal in Japan...Roddy Piper shows up at ringside for AAA match involving his pal The Love Machine (Art Barr)...Jumbo Tsuruta left the hospital after more than 8 months when his hepatitis finally started to take a turn for the better...Mr. Pogo jumps psycho violent promotions and goes from W*ING to FMW...Taue and Kawada beat Misawa and Kenta Kobashi in the match that Promoter Giant Baba called the best in 30 years...Brazo de Plata (Super Porky) wins the CMLL Heavyweight title...Akira Hokuto married Mexican wrestler Talisman Jr.

July-In one of the weirdest events of the year, Mitsuhiro Matsunaga of W*ING went to the house of Mr. Pogo, who had jumped to FMW, and challenged him to a fight in front of a group of reporters...Carlos Colon, and there are a lot of folks who would call him a colon for not making Jose Gonzalez leave the promotion after he murdered Bruiser Brody, announced his retirement...Riki Choshu tore his Achilles tendon...UWFI announces that they will run a PPV in the US in October...Pirata Morgan and MS1 jump to AAA and reform the Infernales tag team with El Satanico...Felino won the mask of Ciclon Ramirez...Big Bubba Bossman Rogers tours with All Japan...Crash the Terminator becomes the first W*ING Heavyweight Champion...Blue Panther beat the Love Machine in a Mask vs hair match in front of 20,000 fans...Giant Baba ran his annual tribute show to Bruiser Brody, and as is the custom, sent the proceeds to Brody's widow...Dick Fly upsets Volk Han in a very entertaining RINGS matchup...JWP has its first TV show air on the WOWOW cable channel in Japan...Jim Cornette signs on with Titan Sports (I know it does not belong here but it shocked me then and it still shocks me now)...JWP has the amazing 60 minute, Most falls win match...Stan Hansen and Kenta Kobashi have a match of the year caliber bout...Dynamite Kid unretires and works for All Japan.

FOREIGN YEAR IN REVIEW (continued)

August-Destroyer Dick Beyer wrestles his final match for All Japan and retires...Love Machine and Blue Panther do a double turn...New Japan runs 7 consecutive nights at Sumo Hall in Tokyo for the GI Tournament and did good, but not great, business drawing 70,000...Tatsumi Fujinami beats Hiroshi Hase in the final to win...Jurassic Powers (Hercules and Scott Norton) beat the Hell raisers for the IWGP Titles...Eddy Guerreo debuts as the new Black Tiger in New Japan...At the 20th anniversary WWC Card Carlos Colon beats Terry Funk in his retirement match...Terry Gordy "takes ill" passing out in a Japanese airport and has not been in the ring since, in the process blowing his main event shot at Mitsuahara Misawa's Triple Crown...Cien Caras wins the hair of MS1...Michinoku Pro debuts its live TV show on the Japanese Space Vision network...AAA has an awe inspiring run of house shows in California that do fabulous business...WWWA Champ Aja Kong of All Japan successfully defends her title against JWP Champ Dynamite Kansai in front of 14,500 at Budokan Hall...Mitsuhiro Matsunaga jumps from W*ING to FMW...Van Vader changes his name to Vader, since New Japan created the gimmick and he had jumped to UWFI...Steve Williams defeats Kenta Kobashi in the best match I have ever seen him wrestle...By beating Kobashi he earns the right to take Gordy's shot at Misawa.

September-Ted DiBiase debuts for All Japan and, with partner Stan Hansen, wins the PWF tag belts...DiBiase shows in that match that he is not a "Japanese caliber" wrestler anymore...FMW and Michinoku Pro start co-promoting...Sicodelico quits Triple A and fans everywhere rejoice...ECW brings W*ING wrestlers into Philly and The Headhunters win an unbelievably barbaric Baseball Bat match from Miguel Perez jr. and Crash the Terminator...AAA starts to burn out Mexico City with their weekly TV tapings and crowds start to fall...New Japan takes in almost 4 million dollars in house revenue during a one week tour...During that tour, Shinya Hashimoto beat the Great Muta for the IWGP title...Pancrase, a new shoot style promotion that appears to be almost if not legit competition, debuts before a sellout crowd of 7,000...EMLL gets Mocho Cota to jump from Triple A thus taking away AAA's ammunition to ruin the EMLL's Anniversary Show.

October-The EMLL Anniversary show is a big success and includes a great hair match between Negro Casas and La Fiera that Casas wins...Triple A goes back on tour with their TV Tapings and draws good houses...UWFI debuts in the US on Pay Per View...MS1 jumps back to the EMLL...EMLL is moved from the favorable Sunday morning TV slot to a Thursday night slot that is often run at different times...Atlantis takes the mask of Mano Negra...Kawada and Kobashi have a hot match (doesn't it seem like every match Kobashi has is hot?)...Akira Maeda draws a sellout on his return to the ring after 9 months...Jumbo Tsuruta also returns for one shot after a lengthy absence...In England, Sid Vicious and Arn Anderson have the stupidest wrestling fight since Jose Gonzalez murders Bruiser Brody...Oro dies in the ring in the saddest wrestling moment of the year.

November-Keiji Muto and Hiroshi Hase won the Super Grade tag tourney...AAA has another very successful swing through California...Rijo del Santo goes through an ugly, highly publicized divorce...Eddie and Doug Gilbert violate every law of Kayfabe by completely exposing the business when Doug, wrestling as Freddy Kreuger, laid down and let Eddie, wrestling as Boogie Man, pin him without a struggle in 13 seconds, said what a joke W*ING was and then pledged allegiance to Giant Baba...Masa Funaki made Maurice Smith submit in what, by all accounts, was a legit shoot by the Pancrase group.

December-Kenta Kobashi and Mitsuahara Misawa win the annual tag tourney and get the tag belts in the process...Nobuhiko Takada makes Vader submit at the 12/5 outdoor stadium show...Shinobu Kandori beats Akira Hokuto in a retirement match.

Year End Impressions and Thoughts

Although the TV numbers would not corroborate it, it was a fabulous year in the ring for All Japan. Week in and week out, there is not better wrestling action available on TV anywhere. Kenta Kobashi broke out as the best wrestler in the world this year. Mitsuahara Misawa was his steady self. Toshiaki Kawada is also one of the world's best. All in all, AJ is easily my favorite male promotion. New Japan on the other hand had great TV and box office numbers but bored me to tears. On TV, they chose to show too many WAR, Skinheads, and boring matches. They showed very little of Junior Heavyweights and put very little of their tournament matches, which are generally very good to great, on TV. It was not just the televised product either. I got numerous handheld tapes of house shows that were also really bad. The blood groups did their usual business, and did not do a whole lot to excite me in the process. Michinoku Pro and Champ Forum were both very enjoyable TV viewing. The Women's groups were very strong this year. Due to all three banding together and promoting Supershows where anyone could win, they increased overall interest and benefited all greatly. The All Japan Women have always had fabulous matches, but they never had hardcore appeal. Now, they have both and the winners are the promoters and the fans. It's kind of like the Japanese version of Smoky Mountain in that it's "wrestling way it should be and the way you like it." In Mexico, AAA is still the number one promotion and had a great year. They were doing great business in the beginning of the year in Mexico City, but when they burned the city out, they wisely took their traveling act to many of the smaller Mexican cities. They also had great turnouts, and shows, in California. While some question the tactics of Tono Pena, no one can question his talent or the results he gets. The EMLL was almost dead for a few months, but has made a pretty good recovery. The Televisa TV network, which owns 4 of the 5 major Mexican stations, Galavisión, and Triple A, moved their show to a poor TV slot. As I remember, they own the EMLL TV rights for at least another year and will apparently try to bury them. I think the EMLL will hang in there though. On the other side of the coin, the UWA, once Mexico's top promotion, has sunk to beyond murky depths. They continue to use the 70's formula of pushing old talent that no one cares about. The resemblance they have to Verne Gagne's AWA is scary. In the spirit of the season, I would like to wish all of the great readers of Chairshots a happy and healthy Holiday season. I hope it's all you want it to be. Until next time.....

A KNEE TO THE GROIN HOLIDAY SPECIAL

"SANTA'S CHRISTMAS BLOOD ORGY!"

BY BUTCH BIGELOW
(Wrestling's Least Respected Columnist)

I felt more devastated than Raymond Burr's loyal houseboy, Raoul, after he discovered he was squeezed out the big Godzilla-like closet case's last will & testament in favor of a shiftless male streetwalker named Cliff! When I drifted out of my death-like coma and into semi-consciousness on the afternoon of December 2, with a cough syrup hangover, a killer case of constipation and an itchy tingle in my nether regions, I couldn't remember what I had done the previous night but I figured that I was better off not knowing, anyway. Since I had passed out with my clothes on, the first thing I noticed was that I had a clump of crumpled mistletoe wedged into my belt buckle. "Oh no! Not the old **Kiss a loved one 'neath the mistletoe** trick again! It musta been one helluva party! For the sake of my manhood, I just hope there were some broads here," I muttered, absently scratching my crotch.

As I stumbled through the rubble and past the gaping crater in the kitchen floor, to make a big pot of my special Tabasco java, I attempted to assess the damage. Oh my God! My apartment looked like Sharon Tate's baby shower! Some lousy rat bastards had scrawled "DKLA RULES!" on my living room walls with what I hoped was only red paint. I immediately had it narrowed down to 2 guys - the despicable duo of Klaus Flouride and DH Peligro. In the hallway, some other goon had drawn an obscene comic strip featuring Sid Vicious and Harvey Whippleman, dressed as elves, in a variety of compromising positions. I guess looks can be deceiving since Whippleman was in the driver's seat, if you get my drift. I don't know who to blame for these perverted murals. All I know is that John Hitchcock had his crayons with him the night before.

While tiptoeing through the carnage and broken glass, surveying the damage through bloodshot eyes, I noticed a blinking red light illuminating a space on the floor beneath my overturned coffee table. It was my goddamn phone answering machine.

BEEEP "Hey Butchy boy! It's me - Barry! It's 3PM. Time to get up. Monster party last night, bud! You were a madman! Hey listen, I've got a few ideas for the New Years party next month. Me and the boys have already decided to have it at your place again. Give me a buzz after you've had your transfusion. Bye." CLICK

BEEEP "Rodney Leighton here. You took advantage of Mabel, my dear beloved cow, and you'll pay dearly! She's mine I tell you - all mine, but after last night she won't even look me straight in the eye, as if she's ashamed of something! Although I blame myself for trusting you with her, this is your fault! Vengeance shall be mine!" CLICK

BEEEP "Hello? This is Stephanie Tramel calling! What have you done with my husband? We've got a pizza parlor to run and a new baby to support and he's off traipsing all over the country doing God knows what! I just barely got him paper trained and now he's probably back to his old bad habits thanks to all of you! I want Brian home NOW or you'll all have hell to pay!" CLICK

BEEEP "I know you're there, Bigelow! It's Lemieux. Answer the damn phone... OK, so you don't want to talk to me, huh? Well, listen up. I have tapes of last night's festivities...video tapes that I think you might want to see or perhaps even purchase...if you know what I mean. Gimme a call or don't. It's your funeral, pal. SEEEE YAAAA!" CLICK

Those dirty bastards! Every time I pass out, these guys make me the scapegoat for all their crummy little schemes! As I entered the bathroom to take a leak and get some ointment for the annoying rash that had erupted on my groin, which I now suspected was anthrax, I gasped in horror as I beheld the bloated carcass of the MIA Brian Tramel passed out cold as a dead carp on the crapper. No wonder his wife was pissed off at me! Somehow during the night, the big goof summoned up the presence of mind to drop his pants before settling his flabby butt upon my sacred porcelain throne, but unfortunately he forgot that he was also wearing jockey shorts, so he was quite a mess. The stench was unbearable. It looked like the night they announced "Ladies and Gentlemen - Elvis has left the planet." The only thing missing was a bushel basket full of half eaten peanut butter and banana sandwiches. Tramel wasn't going anywhere and I sure as hell wasn't about to risk another triple hernia trying to move the moose. I figured I would just leave him there until the next party since it was only a month away, anyway.

I was giving myself a migraine trying to remember what the hell happened the night before. I wondered if Lemieux was bullshitting me about that videotape but I suspected that he wasn't. This wouldn't be the first time those clowns took advantage of my good nature that way. Just then, I heard a tentative rapping on my front door. I hoped it wasn't that Brother George character again, soliciting donations for his **Home for Wayward Teenage**

Nymphomaniacs. As I peeked through a rip in the burgundy velvet curtains that I swiped from the local **Sleazy Tyme One Hour Motel**, I could see that it was even worse than a visit from Brother George, for it was none other than Pete "The Evil Gremlin" Lederberg, peering nervously from left to right as if he didn't want my neighbors to see him standing there. What the hell did he want? My first instinct was to pretend that I wasn't home but reluctantly, I opened the door and let him in.

"Jesus, Pete! What are you doing here? Do you have any idea what time it is?" I snapped.

"Yeah, it's 4:30 in the afternoon," he retorted. "Look, Bigelow, as enchanting a host as you are, this isn't a social call. I left something here last night that I want back. It'll only take a minute to find it. I know she's here somewhere."

"Oh, you must mean Inga. The last time I saw her she was behind the couch with Bowdren and Berkley. She really had a tough night but I think she was OK after that tire patch got glued onto the hole Mike Terry bit into her ass. I remember the explosion now. What a trooper! But do you always overinflate her like that?"

"Hey listen, Bigelow! I do not overinflate her! She's just naturally buxom, that's all! It never happens at home. I never should have brought her with me. Nobody else, except for Leighton, brought dates, anyway, and I felt out of place. Those guys were too rough with her! I'm the only one who knows how to treat her like a lady!"

"Yeah, right! Look, just deflate what's left of your girlfriend, stuff her back into her handy little travel case and get the hell out of here! Do me a favor and take Tramel with you!"

"No way! I got stuck with that big goof last year after that party for Rose's foreskin transplant when he became a Methodist. BT didn't wake up for 5 days and when he did he ate me out of house and home. He's your problem now, Bigelow! Deal with it!"

"Thanks for nothing, Pete! Hey, what the hell went on here last night, anyway? Lemieux is trying to extort me with some sort of videotape. I don't remember a damn thing! Am I in trouble?"

"I don't have a thing to say about that, Bigelow. All I know is that for once, I'm not the butt of everybody's jokes for the next year."

"Well then, hit the road, ya lousy rat bastard! Merry Christmas and a Happy goddamn Hanukkah!"

I was just sinking into what was left of my couch when the doorbell rang again. Oh, my aching head! This time it was a Fed X delivery man with a mysterious unmarked package. Once he assured me that he was pretty sure it wasn't a letter bomb, I signed for it and slammed the door in his face. My suspicions were confirmed as I opened it. It was a copy of that damn videotape Lemieux was taunting me about. I was trying to brace myself for the very worst, but hell, how bad could it be? This wasn't even the first time I had seduced one of Leighton's beloved farm animals so that wasn't a big deal. What the hell could I have done that was worse than that? I very tentatively inserted the tape into my VCR, or what was left of it.

There on the screen of my crummy little 9" black & white TV were the rancid collective images of my deranged **CHAIRSHOTS** compadres, drunkenly singing dirty carols, setting my mangy Christmas tree on fire and peeing in the eggnog. As the camera slowly panned to the left I could see Tim Whitehead and J.Z. Travis engaged in a vicious slap fight over what was left of the humongous turkey carcass. Little did they know that it was actually a buzzard I caught with a dead squirrel stuffed with rat poison. Their only complaint was that it was too salty, but even with all their whining and bitching about their high blood pressure, that didn't stop them from devouring the whole damn thing! It wasn't a pretty picture but what followed was even more sickening.

As you know, whenever Lemieux gets a few drinks under his belt, which is quite frequently, he is capable of all manners of unspeakable depravity. He's been known to have been forcibly escorted out of many a Florida "Gentlemen's Club" for getting bombed out of his gourd on Melon flavored Schnapps, dropping his pants and shouting "Hey baby, take a ride on Space Mole Hill! Wooooooooo!" He tried the same stunt again at the party but before he could drop trou, 3 of the guys hoisted him up by his belt loops and gave him a wedgie that made him squeal louder than Joe Fowler during a shower with Pat Patterson. The incapacitated Lemieux then slumped into a dark corner, going "Eeeeeeeep, eeeeeeeep, gggnnnnkkk..." And this is the goon that's gonna blackmail me?

Anyway, as the infernal videotape droned on, the drunker everybody got, the uglier the festivities became. By now the party had deteriorated into a disjointed series of nude Pennzoil matches between the boys and a couple of chubby Taiwanese hookers out on loan from the Oriental Massage Parlor Dave Scherer runs in his spare time. These broads were literally grinding the guys' faces into the floor - two at a time. Lederberg was passing out from a suffocating

set of leg scissors one of the broads had on his pointy head. He was turning blue but he was grinning like he had just discovered self-abuse for the very first time (when in fact, he had done so over 6 months earlier).

And then there was Rodney Leighton, who had never been trounced this bad by a woman since the time he mud wrestled Traci Lords in Windsor Ontario. This burly Canuck always took pride in the fact that he could easily manhandle a sheep halfway over the edge of a steep cliff so it would "rear back" and succumb to his gnarly **"Canadian Bacon of Love"** rather than fall to its death, but here he was getting his own butt kicked by a burly Chinese streetwalker/ porn starlet named **Soon Yee Ginger Lynn Allen** who had recently broken up with a renowned Jewish film director in NYC. Barry Rose was so stoned from sniffing Elmer's Glue that he shredded all of this clothes off with a pair of dull scissors declaring **"I am truly Sid's evil twin!"** Meanwhile, ever the consummate professional, Jimmy Berkley was acting as referee, frantically diving to the mat making 3 counts against his pals, laughing at them for getting beat up by broads!

Suddenly I saw myself on camera. It was at this point that I realized what the mistletoe belt buckle deal was all about. There I was with a nice big bunch of the stuff jammed into my pants. Then, up saunters Leighton's date, Mabel the cow. The cheap flirt, acting like Rodney isn't even in the room, winks at me and starts grazing on my crotch corsage like it's some kind of a cud or something. I'm getting all hot and bothered as she's contentedly munching away. All of a sudden, she starts to get woozy from the highly toxic red berries. Her eyes bulge as big as Missy's implants, she begins to wobble, moos a feeble "Mooooo?" and keels over right on top of Bowdren who was passed out on the floor with a paper bag on his head after performing his **"Unknown Heel"** act that everybody hates so much. (Earlier on, I had taken the liberty of spraying the inside of the bag with ether to insure that there would be no encores.) It was hard to explain to 911 that we needed an ambulance and a veterinarian pronto, but 10 minutes later Mabel was being hauled off to the **Oscar Meyer Veterinary Clinic** for "treatment". Leighton was already passed out so there was no point in upsetting him any further.

I sensed that the evening had peaked. The boys were beat to hell while the victorious hookers were starting to gripe about not being paid so the DKLA boys expertly picked Rodney's pocket and came up with \$7.00 and some change. The broads complained that it wasn't enough but I was able to convince them that Canadian dollars were worth 100 times more than US currency. With that they squeegeed themselves off with a souvenir Lemieux had stolen in the locker room at a WCW house show, got dressed and headed for the door, pausing briefly to pry one of their IUD's out of the still grinning Peter R. Lederberg's left ear. This was the horrible image that stuck with me as the tape ended and began to fade into silent fuzz. But then what the hell was Lemieux talking about when he hit me with his thinly veiled threats of extortion?

I was about to hit the rewind button when a bright flash erupted upon the screen and I was startled by the collective faces of all my **Chairshots** and wrestling buddies who had gathered the night before, squeezed together into a tight shot. It was pretty gruesome. They were greasy, sweaty, bleary eyed and in some cases, pantsless; obviously suffering the effects of too much "partying" but they seemed happy. What the hell was this all about and why don't I remember this going on the night before? Ron Lemieux, the obvious instigator of this impromptu taping session, struggled through the crowd of teetering bodies and drunkenly addressed the camera.

"Attention Butch Bigelow! I bet you thought I was bullshitting about you doing something really horrible last night! Well, you sure as hell did! You let us in! When you finally passed out last night after finishing off the last bottle of cough syrup, I was somehow able to wake all the boys up to make this little surprise tape for you. The awful truth of it is that we all wanted to thank you for a helluva Christmas party. OK guys, let's hear it for Bigelow!"

"Merry Christmas, Butch! Hooray for Bigelow!" they all shouted over and over in hoarse, slurred voices, staggering in an effort to remain upright. Eventually, they started going down like slobbering dominoes and total chaos erupted until somebody knocked the camera off of it's tripod and all that could be seen was a closeup of Tramel's big twitching butt on the floor. Through the din and clatter I could hear Lemieux's muffled voice cry **"SEEEE YAAAA! mmmgggffggghh..."** Then, for the last time, the picture went dead.

I sat silently for a few moments, staring blankly at the fuzzy screen, trying to comprehend what I had just witnessed. My mind raced through a gamut of emotions ranging from bewilderment to astonishment to anguish to nausea. But then I realized something very important. After all the vile, mean spirited, uncalled for things they had said about me behind my back for all these years; when it came to the really important things in life, like friendship and camaraderie, they didn't despise me so much after all! In fact, to quote Sally "The Flying Nun" Field, **"THEY LIKE ME! THEY ACTUALLY LIKE ME!"** Let that be a lesson to all of you dopey wrestling fans out there!

HAVE A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON, DAMMIT!

THE END

GAG RANDOM MEANDERINGS . . .

By Jeff Zinger

(with spiritual guidance from J.Z. Travis)

Hey! How's it goin'?! Pretty good myself. Well, since it's Dec. 7th (two days past Barry's deadline), I guess I better get off my butt and try to break this writer's block thing (that I've had for a couple years now - more on that later maybe) and get this damn piece done! Lets meander!... Four nights of Disney tapings and all they can come up with is Michael Hayes against Johnny B. Badd? That's a big-time feud, eh?!... Totally loved Bruce Pritchard's Rio Rogers character. As a Dusty parody, it was top-notch - and there's certainly nothing wrong with making fun of "The American Dream" (or "The American Fat Guy", as J.Z. likes to call him), is there?... Can you imagine the letters of outrage to the sheets if Vince M. doesn't get some jail time?. Can't wait to see his new boyfriend in the slammer!... I know WCW's problems have been well-documented, and many (including myself) hate reading the constant negative things, so I'll only touch on this - it's just so fucking frustrating! I want to love WCW! I grew up watching the late 70's Mid-Atlantic period, and my interest through the years has really upped and downed with their stuff. Obviously my interest is at an all time low (I believe that's what's caused the aforementioned writer's block) which is why I don't write much for the sheets anymore (ditto J.Z.). But - speaking of writing - I'll "Do A Ginzburg" (defined as plugging your own publication in a letter/column for someone else's publication - made famous by the editor/publisher of WRESTLING THEN & NOW, Evan Ginzburg, of course) here. From 1988 to late 1990 I published GAG (GRUNT N' GROAN) - a mostly comedy, ground-breaking and highly influential (I'm a very modest dude, aren't I?) very underground wrestling sheet (of sorts - it had lot's o' other stuff, too (music, porn, etc, etc.))! Anyhow, just reprinted my back issue package THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE WORKS OF GAG (64 pages), which can be had for \$10 1st-class postage paid from me at 401 Springbank Ave., Unit #5, Woodstock, Ont., Canada N4S-1P9. End of Ginzburg... A big "Hey!" to my Uncle Jerry Ataman (he's actually my wife's Uncle, but I never had one on my side that I actually liked before, so there ya go). Uncle Jer lets me and my 'rasslin gang (including Greg Vandenheuval, famous for his great Keller-bashing letter in SHOTS #14) come out to watch all the Pay-Per-Views on his dish. Plus he's J.Z.'s role model in life too!... Thanks to my ace WOODSTOCK RECORDS staffer Anne Stueck for typin' this sucker up for me!... Tune-wise, the new REDD KROSS CD, "Phaseshifter", is just an awesome thing! Great live band, too - saw 'em twice in recent months... You gotta love the Collassal Kongs squashes where they don't take off their jacket-vest-robe things!... I think LATE NIGHT WITH CONAN O'BRIEN can be the best talk show in Television Land. He has some off nights (really off, sometimes), but can be brilliantly funny. Plus a great selection of musical guests... You know, at one time (late 70's - early 80's) I thought "Mean" Gene Okerlund was really, really cool (this was when he was with the AWA). After his embarrassing "performance" with Fifi at BATTLE BOWL, well - I don't think he could fall any further... New REN & STIMPY SHOW episodes have been pretty good, but there's definitely something missing without their ousted creator, John Kricfalusi... I know Howard Stern isn't for everyone (although he should be) but "Private Parts" has got to be the funniest book of all-time!... Hey - I'm randomed out! Later!

PASS THE REMOTE!

by Jeff Lynch

Welcome to PASS THE REMOTE! In this column, we will review tapes that are somewhat obscure, avoiding the run of the mill shows already reviewed in other sheets on a regular basis. This means no rehashing of US PPV shows, or even some of the big shows from Japan that have been discussed elsewhere.

Tapes which will be reviewed will be various commercial and hand-held releases with occasional mentions of shows which have aired on TV. So, hit that play button, and off we go:

TIGER MASK DIMENSION II Volumes I and II

In 1992, a three volume set of Tiger Mask matches from 1981-1983 was commercially released in Japan. Each tape was 90 minutes in length, and many of the matches were edited.

For 1993, the Dimension II set was released in two volumes. Both volumes are 2 hours in length, and the matches are generally complete. Most matches are from 1982, with no repeats from the first three volume set. A wide variety of Sayama's opponents are shown with wrestlers from Europe, Mexico and the USA.

VOLUME I

Volume I has seven bouts, four of which have Tiger Mask defending the WWF Jr. Title. These include matches against Bret Hart (2/5/82), Baby Face (2/9/82), Black Tiger (4/21/82) and Dynamite Kid (8/5/82). Another singles match is included against Blackman from 3/12/82. Two tag team matches are on the tape: Tiger and Kengo Kimura -vs- Blackman/Steve Wright (3/31/82), and Tiger teams with Kimura and Tatsumi Fujinami -vs- Dynamite Kid/Bret Hart/Greg Valentine (7/31/82).

VOLUME II

Volume II has eight matches, once again with four title bouts. Tiger Mask defends the WWF Jr. Title against Ultraman (6/18/82) and Black Tiger (9/21/82). He also defends the NWA Jr. Title against Les Thornton (5/25/82) and El Gran Hamada (2/3/83). Other singles include Tiger against Chris Adams (9/17/82) and Marty Jones (10/8/82). Two tag matches are on this tape also: Tiger and Tatsumi Fujinami -vs- Ultraman/El Polaco (6/25/82), and Tiger teams with El Gran Hamada and Kantaro Hoshino -vs- El Texano/Negro Navarro/El Signo (1/14/83).

Both volumes are a must for the Tiger Mask fan, and even for newer fans who have not seen Sayama in action. If you enjoy watching the exploits of Jushin Liger and other junior heavyweights, you will find these tapes contain the same high-flying action. These tapes also provide an introduction to the talents of other foreign wrestlers not well known in the USA. Steve Wright, one of the most respected wrestlers in Germany (and Mexico in his younger days) is a bright spot as is Marty Jones, one of the best Mid-Heavyweights from England. Black Tiger (Mark "Rollerball" Rocco) is also featured on both volumes. Tiger also works well with many of the luchadores from Mexico.

MICHINOKU PRO (TV DEBUT) August 24, 1993

This group debuted with a studio wrestling set of matches under the banner of the Champ Forum show in Japan. This is a rarity in Japan, with the last such taping being a JWP Special (8/16/29), and previously some WING tapings in September 1991. The show features a heel manager, Mr. Toyota (Wally Yamaguchi) and comes across with a Memphis feel to it.

The show opens with Great Sasuki singing. Fortunately, he wrestles better!

1. In a strong style match, Wellington Wilkins Jr. defeated Naohiro Hoshikawa by points (8 - 0) after wrestling the full 10:00 time limit.
2. In a trios match, Terry Boy/Taka Michinoku/Jiraiya defeated Shiryu/Mercurio/Leopard Negro after 16:57. Terry Boy pinned Shiryu while both Michinoku and Jiraiya made Mercurio submit. After the match, Shiryu and Negro got into an argument and fought.
3. Jinsei Shinzaki, managed by Mr. Toyota, destroyed Akihiro Yonekawa and Masato Yakushiji in a handicap match lasting 4:40. Shinzaki and Toyota pummeled the hapless opponents after the match.
4. In a parejas match, Sato and Piloto Suicida defeated Super Boy and Gran Naniwa after 15:09. Good action and double teaming. Finish saw Suicida pin Super Boy and Sato pin Naniwa simultaneously.
5. In a rematch for the UWA Welterweight Title (Sasuki beat Dolphin on 7/24 in Morioka), Super Dolphin regained the strap after pinning Great Sasuke in 18:43. Great high-flying match with some incredible moves. While the referee was KO'd, Shinzaki and Toyota interfered to get Dolphin the win.

QUICK REVIEW: December 19, 1992 Hand-Held CWA Bremen, Germany

The Bremen Final was once again the biggest show in Germany for 1992. The main event saw RW Hawk capture the CWA Title from Rambo (Luc Poirer). New Japan did release a commercial tape version of the show (Vol. 13) which basically highlighted most matches while showing edited versions of the Hawk and Liger matches. This pro-shot hand held tape contains the full length versions of the show's top two matches.

1. Jushin Liger defeated Franz Schumann in the 9th round after about 26:00. This was an excellent match combining some high-flying spots with good mat work. Liger got the pin after a backbreaker followed by a moonsault.
2. Dave "Fit" Finlay defeated Eddie Gilbert in the 7th round after 21:00. Finlay is an unknown commodity in the US, having wrestled mostly in England and Germany with recent tours in New Japan. In Europe, he is the most hated heel with a foul mouth and a tough rule-breaking style. Eddie is the face in this confrontation. Both wrestler show their ability, and Finlay usually manages a cheap shot after the bell in many rounds. Finlay eventually pinned Gilbert with the reverse piledriver.

BUMPS & GRINDS

by Mike Terry

I'm back for the third issue in a row, and now Barry wants 2 pages! I need a raise.....most importantly--I hope each of you has a happy and fulfilling holiday season. Thanks for your support and the feedback. The kind, positive remarks about this column are always appreciated. As for those who disagree with me--kiss my ass! Butt seriously--only joking.

Thanks for the feedback on my Lex Luger crusade. Even though I feel some of the opposing arguments are based on flimsy premises, maybe you feel the same about my argument. Eventually, I may be proven wrong. Then again... Allow me to reiterate a major thrust of what I wrote. It dealt with how many "smart" fans blindly follow whatever "line" is put forth by some of the major wrestling sheet writers. Think for yourselves! Consider all the opinions, then form your own.

Along those lines, while Wade Keller is a convenient target, I think some of the shots recently on these pages have been rather cheap. Petty and personal are 2 other words that come to mind. Sure the Torch has taken a strong position critical of Vince McMahon and the WWF on the latest scandal. But it seems to me that Dave Meltzer has been just as outspoken on this issue, but where are the blasts at him? Wade and his columnists occasionally anger us. Fine--speak out. Write a Letter to the Editor. Valid criticism is fine. But maybe we should all be just as quick to speak out about the many positive aspects of the Torch. And at the risk of sounding like a major suck-up, I think there's plenty more on the plus side of the Torch than the negative. I don't know about you, but my life is decidedly better because of my weekly Torch fix.

While I'm making waves, here's another one to ride. Back to the last Clash of Champions. I can't believe all the criticism of Ric Flair for pushing his main event tag match with Sid Vicious that coming Saturday on TBS. Give me a break! Despite the unfortunate fight between Sid and Arn, Flair is still the ultimate pro we know and love and this is further proof of that fact. That was a marketable main event and in order for people to watch and make those funny little ratings points, people have to know about it and feel compelled to turn in. It has to be sold. That's why Flair pushed it. It's what was best for business. It caused people to tune in. The company--the entire company--benefits from that. I'm sure it was tough for Ric on one level, but he made a business decision, not an emotional one.

It seems the WWF rarely stumbles when introducing a new character, but when they do, they fall head first. Rio Rogers rates with the worst of all time. He's in Ding Dong territory, which is almost all the way to Gobbledeegooker land.

Quotes of the month: Bobby Heenan & Jim Ross. On Mike Sharpe: Bobby: "Mike has one problem." Jim: "Winning."On Bastian Booger: Ross: "Do I look like an authority on Booger?" Heenan: "Boy, you're awful snotty."

Scott Steiner, in lamenting his team's loss to the Quebecers commented that it was a "victory tainted by those Quebec providence rules." Made me think of Jeff Mullins, who, in the latest "Son of Pro Wrestling Sushi," found himself marveling at how much better Ludwig Borga speaks our language than Scott.

Rick Rude scores two bullseyes this month with a couple "affectionate" nicknames, calling Gene Okerlund "divot head," and Davey Boy Smith "the British Wart-hog."

I hope WCW has some magic up their sleeve to heat up the Flair-Vader Starrcade match. While Vader does everything right in his matches and his interviews, he's lukewarm at this point as a heel and as a champion and definitely needs a major win prior to Starrcade as well as some sort of awe-inspiring angle to get the character hot again. Same for Flair. This is the guy we just saw lose to Rick Rude, now we're supposed to believe he's a legitimate challenger to Vader? Even though they're all but coming right out and telling us Flair will win, he also needs a big notch on his holster. He's riding on his rep at this point, and frankly I wonder how many of the present-day viewers are even aware of that rep. Much of the problem here seems to come down to the continuing failure of WCW to develop intriguing story-lines about their characters.

The Bushwackers and Men on a Mission as Doinks at Survivor Series was funny...for about 30 seconds.

Listening to Razor Ramon the other day made me wonder if the Bad Guy has really learned Spanish. Might present some problems in mainstream press interviews if he hasn't. Reminds me of about 200 years ago in Detroit when commentator extraordinaire Lord Layton was conducting a TV interview with Ricky Cortez, a man with a fairly sizeable reputation (which just about matched his girth at that time). Layton asked Ricky if he would mind accommodating some of the Spanish-speaking wrestling fans in the audience with a little discourse in the native tongue. Ricky actually handled it honestly, admitting: "Sorry, Lord, I really don't speak much Spanish." So much for that. One of my great moments in wrestling history.

From that same era, every time I see the Headshrinkers chomping a chicken on the way to the ring, I think of Afa and Sika as "World" Tag Champs in Detroit in the 70s. In an effort to get themselves over, they SERIOUSLY proposed bringing a LIVE chicken on TV, then ripping it apart and eating it. Thankfully, clearer heads prevailed. I'm told that even the Sheik (who owned the territory) paled at the thought.

The Apocalypse must be near--Kevin Sullivan is turning face in Smoky Mountain Wrestling...and the "braintrust" of WCW pulls Harley Race in to sub for Vader against Flair around the horn.

And is there any doubt that Eddie Gilbert is just plain wacko after the latest stunt in Japan? I've felt for a couple years the guy's mind has been short-sheeted, but this is too much.

Seems I remember a quote a couple months ago from Jesse Ventura about being the only wrestler who appears in money-making movies. Haven't heard similar remarks lately. Might be because "Demolition Man" made \$55 million at the box office. Sounds impressive, except when you consider it cost \$70 million to make.

Huh? One week Gene Okerlund knocks McMahon on the hotline, now he thinks the government investigation is a sham and wants to appear as a character witness for McMahon? We could only hope the Justice Department attorney is a female so he could hit on her from the stand.

Separated at birth: Curly Howard of the Three Stooges and USWA referee Frank Morrell. Did you catch Frank on that recent Jeff Jarrett video dressed in the bowler and bow tie? It was vintage Curly. Nyuck, nyuck, nyuck.

The WWF announcing teams sure seem to be in disarray. McMahon desperately needs a heel presence as a co-host on Superstars. It's only been a couple weeks, and I know I should give the guy some more time, but Stan Lane just doesn't cut it for me, nor do I really feel he ever will. Then if Heenan leaves (and stays gone), that leaves 2 positions open. My dream team would be Jim Cornette with Jim Ross on "Challenge," and let's see--McMahon with--hmmm--Paul E. Dangerously. Could hell freeze over yet again? Or is it premature to count Jerry Lawler out of the picture?

Once again, have yourselves a merry little whatever it is you celebrate and I'll be back in your face soon!

HIGHSPOTS & HASHMARKS by Sheldon Goldberg

ADRIFT UPON A SEA OF CHANGE: WHY WRESTLING STILL NEEDS VINCE McMAHON

Originally, this article was supposed to be about wrestling's greatest influences - people, both in and out of the ring, who have left an indelible mark (no pun intended) on some aspect of professional wrestling. As I sit here at the computer, my thoughts stay riveted on one of the names on my list - Vince McMahon, Jr.

McMahon's recent indictment on steroid charges and the potential consequences, to the WWF and American pro wrestling in general, have been the hottest topics in the sheets and in the locker rooms for months. Who can think of the past, when over a few short weeks, the bedrock of the American pro wrestling business, such as it is, has been so shaken.

There is no question that Vince McMahon, Jr. was the biggest influence on pro wrestling in the 80's and 90's. In many ways, he is wrestling's greatest influence ever. His presence will be felt for many, many years to come regardless of whether or not he continues actively promoting. It is bitter irony that Hulk Hogan, the man McMahon shot to the top of the wrestling world and beyond into mainstream media stardom, may be the one to write the final chapter in the Vince McMahon story. It is now alleged that Hogan will testify for the government against McMahon.

There are some who are happy that Vince McMahon and the WWF may be ready to crumble. I, for one, think it would be the worst thing in the history of American pro wrestling.

Regardless of the guilt or innocence of any of the parties involved in these most recent events, the business of pro wrestling in America is about to undergo drastic changes. For the most part, these are changes that would have happened anyway, regardless of scandals and controversies. Let's face it, the cracks in the U.S. wrestling business have been showing for some time now - declining house show attendance and TV ratings, stale talent and the inability of the business to create new stars who can draw money, and the inability of those in charge to steer through the stormy seas of changing American tastes.

Prior to 1984, wrestling was a patchwork quilt of aging promoters, too happy with the status quo to see that the world was changing, and too old to move quickly enough to capitalize on the opportunities change creates. Even in the early 60's, promoters couldn't agree on anything. I recently got to see some old correspondence between NWA members and Sam Munchnick, then NWA president, circa 1961. Believe it or not, the NWA was almost dissolved in that year, over who should or shouldn't be allowed to join. Only Sam Munchnick's leadership held the NWA and professional wrestling together.

In 1984, with the cable TV revolution heating up, it was inevitable that pro wrestling would once again enter the national television spotlight. Some say Vince McMahon, Jr. was simply lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time. While that is partly true, Vince was also the only man who had vision enough to see the opportunity and guts enough to act on it. You may not like what direction he took with the product, but at least he took it somewhere.

Should the McMahon and the WWF disappear, who could possibly fill the void created

by its absence? Certainly not WCW, even if they hired everybody from the WWF. While there are other promoters out there who are bright and knowledgeable about wrestling, I doubt that anyone out there could step in and not only operate a WWF-sized outfit, but plot a successful course for the future.

The only situation I can think of that compares to this is one that has nothing to do with wrestling.

In 1956, the Federal government took action against The Shubert Organization, who owned or controlled most of the theatres on Broadway and the road at that time. They also produced most of the shows. In effect, they were a monopoly and the Government made them divest themselves of most of their theatres and get out of the business of producing plays.

While this did create the opportunity for competition, there was no one person or company on the scene who was able to pick up the slack. As a result, many of the Shubert's old theaters became movie houses, porn theaters or parking lots. The business never really recovered and live theater lost its place in America as true popular entertainment.

This is not to say that should the worst happen, wrestling will die in America. There will always be pro wrestling in the United States. But the loss of McMahon to wrestling would undoubtedly mean the loss of many innocent people's jobs. Who knows what kind of impact it will have on others who would try promoting in the wake of the disintegration of wrestling's biggest U.S. office.

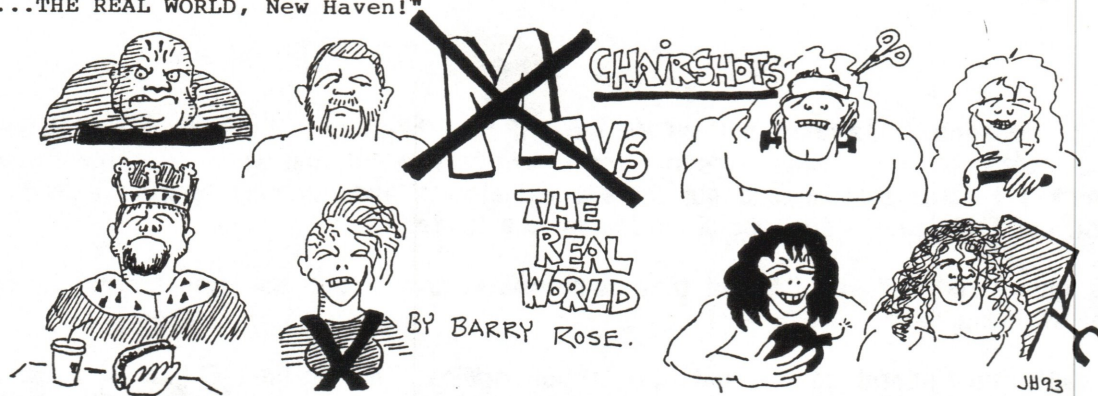
If Vince survives this ordeal, he's already shown us that he can make the changes the times call for. Thanks to their drug testing program (Granted, it was brought about by pressure), the steroid monsters are pretty much gone. Seeing they aren't strong enough at the box office or deep enough in terms of talent to run the whole country, the office has pulled their activities back to center on the Northeast. The agreements with the USWA (though with Lawler's recent troubles that's doubtful now) and SMW are at least moves in the direction of a regionalization of the WWF office. Bringing women wrestlers back into the ring (a long overdue move, in my opinion) is at least a gesture towards adding some more variety to the product.

The presence of the UWFI on pay per view and AAA's resurgence in California are hopeful signs that a multitude of wrestling styles can profitably exist in America. The fact is we are years away from that being a reality.

For those of you who think that morality would best be served by the downfall of the WWF, my advice to you is to look for morality elsewhere. Wrestling is not the priesthood. Sure, if McMahon committed a crime, he should be punished. But let's not punish wrestling or the wrestlers or the fans. The survival of the WWF is the key to bringing wrestling back around to its inevitable resurgence.

(Sheldon Goldberg publishes Mat Marketplace, pro wrestling's only merchandise & memorabilia publication. This bi-monthly newsletter features articles on past and present stars, tips for collectors, product and video reviews and free reader classified ads. If you are a serious collector or just looking for unusual items and interesting reading, you owe it to yourself to try an issue. The price is \$2.50 per issue, \$3 outside the U.S. One year, six issues is \$12, \$15 outside the U.S. Make checks payable to Mat Marketplace and send to P.O. Box 2371, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.)

"This is a story of seven wrestlers picked to live in an apartment and have their lives taped to find out what happens when people stop being polite and start getting real...THE REAL WORLD, New Haven!"



WEEK ONE: The roommates move into their home for the next ten weeks, a three bedroom apartment in downtown New Haven, Conn. "Moving day was a real mess," recalled Arn Anderson. "Sabu and I showed up kind of early and took the bedroom next to the toilet. Abdullah, Onita and Sid Vicious showed up next and they took the big room down at the end of the hall. Luna and Madusa came last and they were pissed that they did not get the big room. So everybody starts screaming at each other and then Madusa gives Onita a kick to the head and knocks him out cold. Luna then starts cursing at Sid, and he got a little frightened and locked himself in a closet for three hours." Luna remembers things a bit differently. "Me and Dusey stopped and had us a couple of brews and showed up late. Sid told us we had to take the bedroom with the lousy view of Vince's house and then Onita said something to Madusa in Japanese. The next thing I know Madusa clocks Onita on the head and he's out. Then Sabu starts accusing me of starting the fight, so I called him an asshole. They're all assholes." Arn noticed an instant change in Sabu. "As soon as Luna called him an a-hole, he got this wild look in his eyes and ran into the living room. He did a moonsault onto the coffee table and cracked that sucker right in half. Damdest thing I ever saw."

WEEK TWO: Madusa is upset with her roommates. "I was told that I'd be allowed to have my dog, Kisska, live with me in the apartment. Now I'm hearing some story about Abby having a court order that bars him from being within 100 feet of a live animal. I'm not too happy about this." The roommates notice the strange affection that Sid has for an inanimate object. "Me and double A were watching a Brave's game when we heard strange sounds coming from Sid's room," recalled Sabu, "so we went to investigate. I swung open the door and Sid was in bed with a wooden based, plastic lined squeegee. The sickest part of the whole thing was that he called it Nancy. Weird guy, that Sid!" The roommates pick Friday as their "get together" evening. "Personally," said Arn, "I would've picked tuesday night. But, as it turns out, Onita is an orthodox Jew and can't leave home after sundown on Fridays." Luna recalls wanting a different night. "Friday was my big night out at the Golden Spike. I told them all to go fuck themselves, and as soon as I said 'fuck', Sabu runs and does a moonsault on the dining room table. Strangest thing I've ever seen."

WEEK THREE: Greg Valentine shows up to visit Madusa and gets angry at her when he spots Sabu and Madusa flirting. "Sabu and I are just friends," announced Madusa. "Somebody in this apartment has been spreading a rumor that I'm only attracted to second generation workers. Greg heard that and got all bent out of shape." Arn finishes the story. "Valentine called Sabu a camel jockey and then Luna got involved and called him a son of a bitch. Sabu gets that weird look in his eye again and takes off and does a moonsault on the kitchen table and splits it in two. Most bizarre thing I ever saw." Abdullah and Onita also have angry words between them. "Abby's an alright dude, but I've told him dozens of times to stay away from my razor blades. I came home and Abby's got my Gillette in his shorts. I got mad and yelled at him," said Onita.

WEEK FOUR: An argument breaks out between Arn and Sid at the weekly poker game. "I was doing my Dusty Rhodes impersonation and Sid got really angry," proclaimed Arn. "Mah boy Duth'tin went to git me thum bith'cuts and grayvee. Git me a Budwizer, if you weeel." Sabu remembers what followed. "Double A told Sid to stuff it. He said he had done the Rhodes impression hundreds of times and that he'd do it another hundred if he wants. We seperated them and Arn went to his room. Five minutes later, Sid goes and breaks the door down and hits Arn with a chair. Somebody pulls out a blade and Arn winds up cut from head to toe. Everybody in the apartment knew Sid was taking those late night blading classes with Onita and Abby and Lorena Bobbitt, we just did not think something like this would happen." The roommates hold a meeting and decide to kick Sid out of the apartment and interview two wrestlers for his spot. "We had narrowed it down to two guys-Jerry Lawler and Tracy Smothers," said Luna. "Jerry came in looking like a dime store country boy and cracked us all up with his tired one liners. We liked him immediately." Abdullah was less than thrilled with the prospect of having Smothers for a roommate. "I got a bad first impression from that guy," announced Abdullah. "He walks in waving that damn Confederate flag of his and I got offended. It's the nineties, you know!"

WEEK FIVE: Lawler is chosen as the new roommate, but he and Madusa have immediate problems. "The guy comes strutting in here like he's a King or something," yelled Madusa, "and he had that Joey Buttafuoco guy with him. They both disappeared into Jerry's room to watch some 'Punky Brewster' tapes. I thought it was rude, and told him so!" Luna had her problems with both Onita and Abdullah. "Onita was screaming about Luna mixing in the whites with the dark colors and turning everything a medium shade of pink," said Arn. "But the situation with Abby was far more serious. Everyone in the apartment knows that Luna has the hots for Abby and she's always pinching his butt and stuff like that. Well, Abby stepped out of the shower and Luna surprises him and grabs his package. Abby started crying and he fled from the house. We didn't hear from him until four hours later when the New Haven Police Department called and said they were holding him for trespassing onto Vince's property. They released him into our custody."

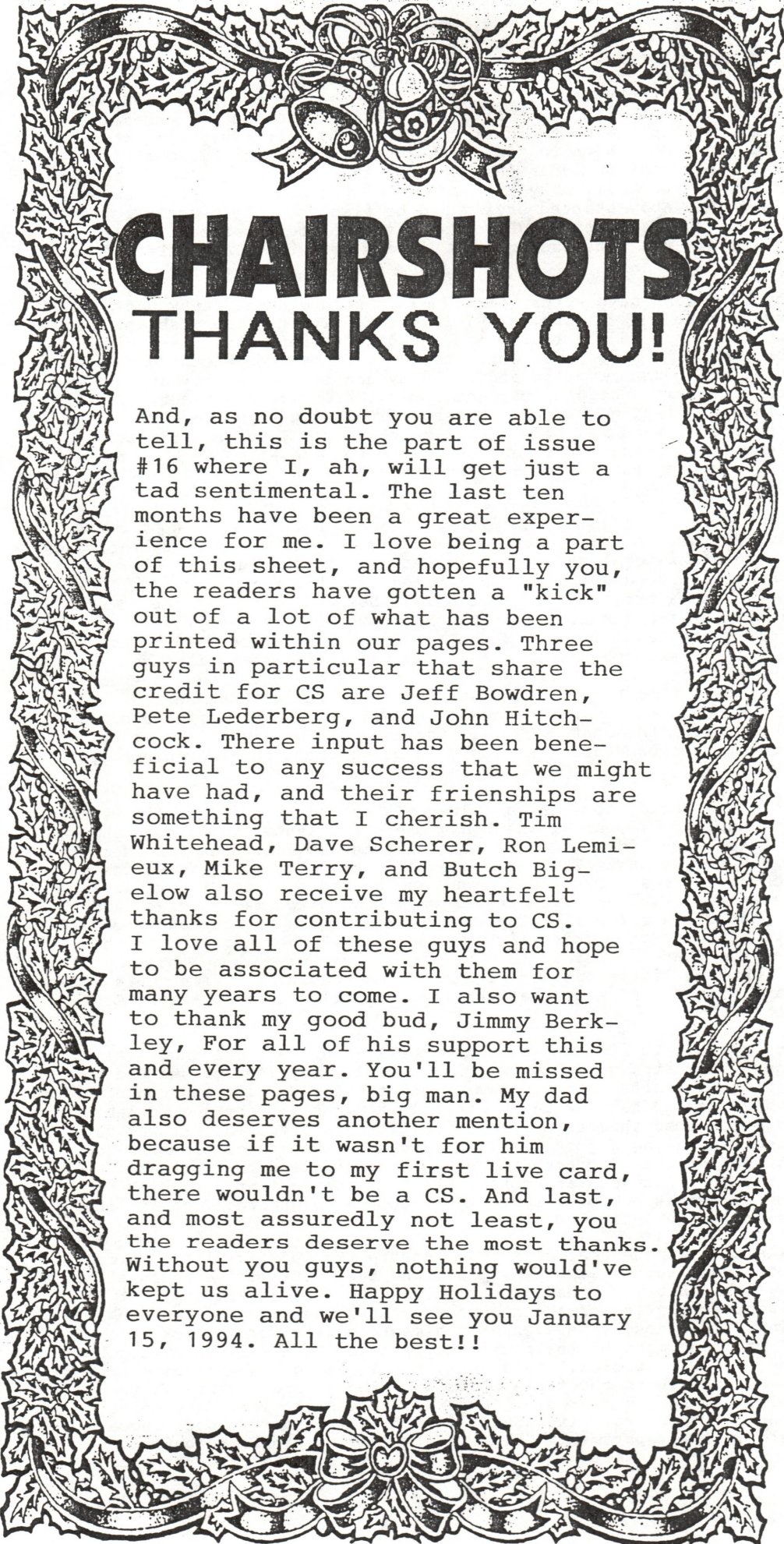
WEEK SIX: Abdullah and Madusa have words. "I'm human," said Madusa. "Abby had a call from Baba who wanted him to work a tour, and I forgot to give him the message. I apologized a bunch of times, but he was really mad and didn't want to hear anything I had to say." Lawler and Onita also had a conflict. "I'm in my room watching some Molly Ringwald movies when Onita runs in and grabs my lighter. He runs back out and thirty seconds later there is an explosion that rocks the entire apartment," recalls Lawler. "So, I run into the living room and there's explosives everywhere. Damn Onita and Sabu were having one of those exploding mine matches. So, I yelled at Onita, calling him some derogatory ethnic slur, and he starts yelling at me in that funny language of his. Then he goes into my closet and grabs my 'Full House' videos. If Arn hadn't calmed me down, I would've kicked his hiney!"

WEEK SEVEN: The group decides to go out to dinner. "We all agreed to go to Taco Bell. We did it primarily for The King," proclaimed Onita. "But, Jerry said that he already had plans to stay home and watch some tv show called 'Blossom'." Luna remembers what happened next. "Arn decided to drive, so we all piled into his car. We got to TB a little after eight and had a pretty good time. Sabu, Abby and Onita all jabbed each other with the plastic forks and knives and Abby kept squirting the guys with the hot sauce packets. Double A started doing his Macho Man impersonation for me and Dusey, and I got pissed." Arn finishes the story. "I did my Savage impersonation that I do all the time. 'CHIPS!!! GOTTA HAVE SPICE! OHHH, YEAHH!!' Everybody always seemed to like that one, except this time Luna freaks out. She calls me a cocksucker and Sabu overhears this and goes nuts. He starts moonsaulting all of the tables in Taco Bell, even the booths. The manager threatened to call the cops, so we hightailed it out of there." The roommates return home and join Jerry as he watches the Brady Bunch episode, 'Cindy Gets Her Period'.

WEEK EIGHT: The roommates decide to spend an afternoon at the mall. "I really wanted to see the new John Hughes movie, and I knew that the girls wanted to do some shopping, so it seemed like a good idea at the time," muttered Lawler. Luna finishes the story. "We all decided to see that 'Curly Sue' movie because The King was so insistent. The flick sucked, so me and Dusey snuck out and headed over to Victoria's secret. We were in the store for about five minutes when some bitch made a crack about the red crotchless panties that I was trying on. I called her a carpet munching dyke and then Madusa gave her a great looking kick to the chops." Sabu got into trouble at Macy's. "I was on the fourth floor in the furniture department when I hear Luna call some kid a bed wetting little bastard. I started moonsaulting coffee table after dining room table and when I finished I had done twelve tables in all. Arezzi Couldve made a fortune in there."

WEEK NINE: The group decides to play a game of softball with the local church team. Anderson recalls one of the stranger moments. "I was really suprised to see Sid on the team. Luna saw him and started chasing him around the field. Sid was running as fast as he could and screaming for the pastor to help him. We all got a good laugh out of that." Onita proclaimed this as a special day for all involved. "It was very obvious that everyone was having a good time. Arn and Luna had a beer drinking contest and Abby spent most of the afternoon at the concession stand trying to set a record for downing the most hot dogs and cokes. The King was so impressed with the spirit of the church team that he volunteered to coach the neighborhood girls little league team. It was truly a beautiful day."

WEEK TEN: A party was held at the apartment to celebrate the wedding of Madusa and Greg. "It was also the unofficial going away party and the last time we would all be together as roomies," said Sabu, who had a tear in his eye. Onita took a moment to reflect on the imminent seperation of the roommates. "It's been a great ten weeks. Abby and I will always be in touch. We even have a meeting with some Schick stock holders next week." The highlight of the party occurred when Sabu was asked to cut the cake. "We wanted it to be special," said Luna, "so I called him a nothing happening little prick. He moonsaults the table where the cake is and smashes it to a zillion pieces. Coolest thing you ever saw." Arn was the last to leave and offered advice for any potential roommates. "It was a time that I'll never forget. There were some good people in that apartment. Sure, we all had our problems, but underneath it all we respected and admired each other. You always gotta have respect."



CHAIRSHOTS THANKS YOU!

And, as no doubt you are able to tell, this is the part of issue #16 where I, ah, will get just a tad sentimental. The last ten months have been a great experience for me. I love being a part of this sheet, and hopefully you, the readers have gotten a "kick" out of a lot of what has been printed within our pages. Three guys in particular that share the credit for CS are Jeff Bowdren, Pete Lederberg, and John Hitchcock. Their input has been beneficial to any success that we might have had, and their friendships are something that I cherish. Tim Whitehead, Dave Scherer, Ron Lemieux, Mike Terry, and Butch Bigelow also receive my heartfelt thanks for contributing to CS. I love all of these guys and hope to be associated with them for many years to come. I also want to thank my good bud, Jimmy Berkeley, for all of his support this and every year. You'll be missed in these pages, big man. My dad also deserves another mention, because if it wasn't for him dragging me to my first live card, there wouldn't be a CS. And last, and most assuredly not least, you the readers deserve the most thanks. Without you guys, nothing would've kept us alive. Happy Holidays to everyone and we'll see you January 15, 1994. All the best!!

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